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## Afonso de Albuquerque

1453-1515

In 1925, the Portuguese poet Fernando Pessoa wrote a guidebook for tourists that unapologetically celebrated his nation's people and history. In his passage describing a park dedicated to Afonso de Albuquerque in Lisbon's Belém neighborhood, Pessoa lauds the "ample space, with gardens, in the middle of which stands the monument to that great historic figure, the greatest of viceroys of India and the founder of modern imperialism."<sup>1</sup> It is an apt description, if an unintentionally ironic one, for the memorial reveals so much about how perceptions of the past change. What was once happily celebrated with patriotism is often viewed today with skepticism, hostility or embarrassment.



Erected through an endowment provided by a prominent Portuguese historian, the Albuquerque monument was constructed in 1901.<sup>2</sup> Near the base, still sufficiently close to eye-level, four friezes heroically depict defining moments in Albuquerque's career. The first, on the southeast side of the monument, shows Albuquerque refusing Muslim gifts, his head held high in indignation, as the gift-givers' hands gesture their disbelief. The second, facing northeast, shows two men on bended knees presenting Albuquerque with the keys to the Indian city of Goa. In the third, on the northwest side, Albuquerque rallies his men in the conquest of the Malaysian port of Malacca, his sword pointing toward the direction of victory. In the final frieze, on the southwest side,

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<sup>1</sup> Fernando Pessoa, *Lisbon: What the Tourist Should See* (Exeter, U.K.: Shearsman Books, 2008), 62. It should be noted that Albuquerque was never actually appointed viceroy as his predecessor had been and his successors were; rather, he simply held the title of governor. For a critique of Pessoa's guidebook, which was originally published in English, see Danielle Alves Lopes, Rita Baleiro, and Sílvia Quinteiro, "Os Guias De Viagens De Fernando Pessoa e De Manuel Bandeira: Uma Leitura Comparada." *Acta Scientiarum. Language and Culture* 39, no. 1 (2017): 93-102, ProQuest Central.

<sup>2</sup> The historian was Simão José da Luz Soriano (1802-1891). The sculptor was Costa Mota and the architect was Silva Pinto. A government website lists the inauguration date as 1902, but the inscription on the statue says 1901. See "Pc. Afonso Albuquerque,"

<http://www.mosteirojeronimos.gov.pt/en/index.php?s=white&pid=200>

Albuquerque descends the steps of a dais in Hormuz to initiate a murderous deception.<sup>3</sup> Above the friezes four angelic figures, three female and one male, rest upon the heads of elephants. The female figures all wear long-sleeved, nineteenth-century dresses with high collars. One carries a flag and a banner with Albuquerque's name emblazoned upon it; the second carries the Ten Commandments and a sword; and the third holds a book and a rudder. The male figure, mostly naked, carries a sword and a shield. Between the angels are four identical carvings of carracks, the revolutionary ships that aided Portuguese exploration. Above the carracks and the angels, a tall column rises, which is capped with Portugal's coat of arms and armillary spheres. At the top of the column stands a large bronze statue of the tall, bearded governor, looking with conviction towards the horizon. His left hand rests on the hilt of a long sword, while his right points to the weapons gathered at his feet. All told, it is a monument that celebrates Portuguese imperial righteousness and Albuquerque's importance in the development of the modern world. Like any memorial, however, it only tells part of the story.

Afonso de Albuquerque was born in 1453, the same year that Ottoman Sultan Mehmed II took Constantinople and destroyed the Byzantine empire.<sup>4</sup> This seems apt, since so much of Albuquerque's life ended up being defined by his vengeful struggle against Islam.<sup>5</sup> It also fits with his family's long history of service to the kings of Portugal and Castile and the resurgence of anti-Muslim sentiment in Europe in the wake of the fall of Constantinople.<sup>6</sup> Because of his family's connections, Albuquerque was raised in the royal palace where he obtained a solid education. He also developed a close friendship with the heir to the throne, the future João II. The two boys grew up in a country both poor and minor—a place with few natural

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<sup>3</sup> Pessoa describes the four friezes in his guidebook. After I visited the memorial in April 2018, I agree with him about the content of three of the four panels, but believe he misidentified the southwestern frieze. Pessoa states that the fourth panel shows "the Reception of the Ambassador of the Kings of Narsinga," which was what the Portuguese once called the Indian empire of Vijayanagara. See Pessoa, *Lisbon: What the Tourist Should See*, 62. It is worth noting that there was a 25-year lapse between when the statue was constructed and when Pessoa wrote, and that Pessoa makes other minor errors in the guidebook, including a misattribution of a plaque at the Torre de Belém. With regards to the damaged southeastern frieze involving Albuquerque's refusing of gifts or bribes, it is not clear to me exactly where this took place. It may be a tribute to repeated episodes during Albuquerque's interactions in the Indian Ocean. One specific event that the frieze could depict occurred at Calayate (today's Qalhat, Oman) and is described later in this chapter. For a description of the actual reception of the Vijayanagara ambassador, see [Braz] Afonso de Albuquerque, *The Commentaries of the Great Afonso Dalboquerque*, Volume 4, Walter de Gray Birch (trans.) (London: The Hakluyt Society, 1888), 122. Braz de Albuquerque was Afonso de Albuquerque's illegitimate son, who was born in 1500. Albuquerque had him legitimized six years later and entrusted his education and upbringing to Manuel I's court. Upon Albuquerque's death in 1515, Manuel changed Braz's name to Afonso. To help distinguish other primary source citations by Afonso and Braz's *Commentaries*, I have added Braz's name to the relevant citations.

<sup>4</sup> The exact date of Albuquerque's birth is not known, but most agree that it occurred sometime in 1453.

<sup>5</sup> The intent of this book is to present history from the perspective of the individuals selected. Albuquerque's documented hatred of Islam does not, however, imply that there has been an automatic or inevitable "clash of civilizations" between Muslims and Christians. While wars can begin for ideological reasons, they also are often rooted in economic competition, individual egos, particular circumstances, and even chance. For a discussion of the "clash of civilizations" paradigm, see, for example, Richard W. Bulliet, *The Case for Islamo-Christian Civilization* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006); and Chiara Bottici and Benoît Challand, *The Myth of the Clash of Civilization* (New York: Routledge, 2012).

<sup>6</sup> For information on the family background and upbringing, see [Braz] Afonso de Albuquerque, *The Commentaries*, Volume 4, 213-217; or John Villiers, "Introduction: Faithful Servant and Ungrateful Master," in *Albuquerque: Caesar of the East: Selected Texts by Afonso de Albuquerque and His Son*, T. F. Earle and John Villiers (eds.) (Warminster, U.K.: Aris & Phillips, 1990), 2. For the effects of the fall on Constantinople on the European mindset, see Roger Crowley, *1453: The Holy War for Constantinople and the Clash of Islam and the West* (New York: Hyperion, 2005), 238-239.

resources, a small population, and a continuing problem with famine.<sup>7</sup> These difficult economic circumstances encouraged fifteenth century Portuguese kings to look beyond their borders, especially towards Morocco, Madeira, and the Azores.<sup>8</sup> They hoped to conquer territories and settle new lands that would enrich Portugal's grain supply and improve its gold reserves.<sup>9</sup> In 1458, João's father seized the Moroccan port of Alcácer-Seguer as part of this effort, and in 1471 Albuquerque and João II fought together in the Portuguese capture of Arzila—a battle which resulted in the killing of 2,000 inhabitants and taking of 5,000 captives. The terror inflicted upon Arzila was so traumatic that the residents of nearby Tangier abandoned their city without a fight, lest they too be victimized by Portuguese brutality.<sup>10</sup>



Like many noblemen, Albuquerque remained in Morocco after the capture of Arzila, for a culture of medieval chivalry persisted within the Portuguese elite that required stories of glory, looked to profit from the spoils of war, and sought continued revenge against the Infidel.<sup>11</sup> For these *fidalgos*, knighthood was, in the words of one king, “a combination of virtue and honourable power,” and weapons were “a means to gain honour.” Furthermore, knights were “obligated to sacrifice their lives for their religion, for their country, and for the protection of the [Christian] helpless.”<sup>12</sup> Albuquerque believed these words fervently and so spent the better part of his twenties in Morocco, probably based in Arzila. During this period, he developed a deep

<sup>7</sup> Felipe Fernández-Armesto, “Portuguese Expansion in a Global Context,” *Portuguese Oceanic Expansion, 1400-1800*, Francisco Bethencourt and Diogo Ramada Curto (eds.) (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 484-485 and Roger Crowley, *Conquerors: How Portugal Forged the First Global Empire* (New York: Random House, 2015), xxi. Portugal's population in 1415 was about one million; a hundred years later, it had grown to about 1.5 million, but this was still a quarter of Castile's population and about half of England's for the early sixteenth century.

<sup>8</sup> For a detailed discussion of the settlement of Madeira and the Azores, see Peter Russell, *Prince Henry “the Navigator”: A Life* (New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 2000), 85-100 and 99-106.

<sup>9</sup> Ines G. Županov and Ângela Barreto Xavier, “Quest for Permanence in the Tropics: Portuguese Bioprospecting in Asia (16<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> Centuries),” *Journal of The Economic & Social History of The Orient*, 57, no. 4 (November 2014): 511-548. EBSCOhost and Vincent J., Cornell, “Socioeconomic Dimensions of Reconquista and Jihad in Morocco: Portuguese Dukkala and the Sadid Sus, 1450-1557.” *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, no. 4 (1990): 379-418, EBSCOhost.

<sup>10</sup> Bailey W. Diffie and George D. Winius, *Foundations of the Portuguese Empire, 1415-1580* (Minneapolis, Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press, 1977), 145. João II's father was Afonso V (1438-1481). Alcácer-Seguer (today's Ksar es-Seghir) is about 20 miles northeast of Tangier. Arzila (today's Asilah) is about 25 miles southwest of Tangier.

<sup>11</sup> Malyn Newitt, “Introduction,” *The Portuguese in West Africa, 1415-1670: A Documentary History*, Malyn Newitt, ed., (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 4, 25; Crowley, *Conquerors*, 123.

<sup>12</sup> Afonso V quoted in C. R. Boxer, *The Portuguese Seaborne Empire, 1415-1825* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1969), 316. These words were delivered at João's knighting ceremony on August 24, 1471.

hatred for Muslims while honing his brutal approach to war.<sup>13</sup> Chivalrous war did not preclude violence against civilians; in fact, it helped define it in the proper circumstances.<sup>14</sup>

João II was particularly interested in economic issues, which is why he directed many of the Moroccan campaigns in the 1470s toward ports that could facilitate the trade of Moroccan grain and horses for Portugal and Moroccan textiles for sub-Saharan Africa. Through a combination of force and negotiation, Portugal's success was such that most the people along Morocco's Atlantic coast came to accept Portuguese domination; a burgeoning demand for trade proved more enticing than war.<sup>15</sup> Such accommodation did not diminish Albuquerque's convictions regarding Muslims, however, for new threats and indignities emerged. In late July 1480 Ottoman Sultan Mehmed II landed an army to take the city of Otranto as a first step in an Ottoman conquest of the Italian states. After a successful fifteen-day siege, the Ottomans killed thousands of Otranto's residents and sold thousands more into slavery. The 800 men who were defending the Cathedral refused to renounce their Christian faith when Mehmed II forced open its doors. All were subsequently executed on a hill outside of town.<sup>16</sup> The archbishop, who refused to leave the cathedral, was sawn in two upon the altar.<sup>17</sup> Outraged, Albuquerque joined the Portuguese response to these atrocities, for he was on one of the twenty-five ships Portugal sent to help repulse the Turks as part of the pope's coalition to defend the King of Naples.<sup>18</sup> The effort came to naught, however, because the Portuguese arrived too late to be of any service: upon Mehmed II's death in May 1481, the Ottomans withdrew their troops from Otranto to help defend Mehmed's oldest son in a struggle over the succession.<sup>19</sup>

When João II became king upon his father's death in 1481, he appointed Albuquerque his chief equerry or master of horse.<sup>20</sup> Because both men were known for their intelligence, sense of duty, and deep religiosity,<sup>21</sup> João wanted Albuquerque as part of his inner circle of advisors. This access gave Albuquerque access to the secret intelligence coming back from the continuing exploratory voyages along the western coast of Africa. These voyages began

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<sup>13</sup> Villiers, "Introduction," *Albuquerque: Caesar of the East*, 3. Some scholars, including Villiers, indicate that Albuquerque was stationed at Anafé or Anfa (modern Casablanca), instead of at Arzila during this decade.

<sup>14</sup> Richard W. Kaeuper, *Medieval Chivalry* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 5, 9, 14-15, 163-167.

<sup>15</sup> A. R. Disney, *A History of Portugal and the Portuguese Empire*, Volume 2 (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 7-8.

<sup>16</sup> Valentina Giuffra, and Gino Fornaciari, "Research Paper: Pulverized Human Skull in Pharmacological Preparations: Possible Evidence from the "Martyrs of Otranto" (Southern Italy, 1480)." *Journal of Ethnopharmacology* 160 (February 3, 2015): 133-139. *ScienceDirect*, EBSCOhost.

<sup>17</sup> Hugh Thomas, *Rivers of Gold: The Rise of the Spanish Empire, from Columbus to Magellan* (New York: Random House, 2003), 73.

<sup>18</sup> Nicolao Pagliarini, "To the Reader," *The Commentaries of the Great Afonso Dalboquerque*, Volume 1, Walter de Gray Birch (trans.) (London: The Hakluyt Society, 1875), xxxviii.

<sup>19</sup> The Portuguese may have dallied in Rome and in Naples, compounding the problems of their late arrival. Mehmed's eldest son was Bayezid II (1447-1512), but a much younger son, Cem (1459- 1495) presented military challenges for Bayezid for a year. See Lord Kinross, *The Ottoman Centuries: the Rise and Fall of the Turkish Empire* (New York: Morrow Quill Paperbacks, 1977), 161-163; and Ludwig Pastor, *The History of the Popes from the Close of the Middle Ages*, Volume 4, Frederick Ignatius Antrobus (ed.), (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.) (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner & Co.,1900), 344-345.

<sup>20</sup> The title in Portuguese was *estribeiro-mor*.

<sup>21</sup> It is always difficult to prove that the faith witnessed later in life had been present in those when younger, and this is particularly true for Albuquerque since so little is written about his life prior to 1503. For a discussion of the religious atmosphere of the Avis court, see Maria De Lurdes Rosa, "Espiritualidade(s) na corte (Portugal, c. 1450-c. 1520): que leituras, que sentidos?" [Spirituality(ies) in the Court (Portugal, c. 1450-c.1520): Interpretations and Meanings], *Anuario De Historia De La Iglesia* no. 26 (2017): 217, EBSCOhost. For a reference specifically to João's faith see A. R. Disney, *A History of Portugal and the Portuguese Empire*, Volume 1 (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 133.

in 1434, when Gil Eanes sailed south into waters which medieval Europeans thought to be so filled with monsters and trickery that they were judged impossible to navigate.<sup>22</sup> The voyages continued in 1445 with Alvise Cadamosto's voyage to Cape Verde in Senegal and up the Gambia River and with Fernão Gomes' caravels\*<sup>23</sup> reaching Ghana's Gold Coast. The Portuguese also crossed the Equator off Gabon by 1474. In the 1480s, João sent Diogo Cão on three voyages, during which he left stone markers to demarcate Portugal's claim, sailed a hundred miles up the Congo River, traveled overland into modern Angola to make contact with the king of Kongo, and sailed as far south as Cape Cross in central Namibia.<sup>24</sup> Bartolomeu Dias completed Portugal's exploration of Africa's Atlantic coast when he rounded the Cape of Good Hope and sailed into the Indian Ocean in 1488. This fifty-four-year, inch-by-inch exploration of the 7,500-mile coastline may seem rather timid to the modern eye, but given the vast array of technological, logistical, climatic, navigational, and financial challenges these fifteenth century explorers faced as they ventured into the complete unknown, it is little wonder that each returning voyage was celebrated heartily by the court in Lisbon.

Conversely, however, there was great concern in the Portuguese court when Christopher Columbus arrived in Lisbon in March 1493, gloating before a king who had once rejected his overtures for sponsorship, with the shocking news that he had reached India by sailing west.<sup>25</sup> João II immediately wrote to Spain's monarchs, Ferdinand and Isabella, complaining that Columbus had violated the 1479 Treaty of Alcaçovas. According to this treaty, which ended the War of the Castilian Succession, Portugal had renounced its claim to the Castilian throne and had recognized Castilian control of the Canary Islands in exchange for Castile's recognition of Portugal's claims to Madeira, the Azores, and lands in Africa "discovered and to be discovered."<sup>26</sup> Because this recognition included a monopoly on all trade from these lands,<sup>27</sup> João believed that Columbus had violated this agreement. Ferdinand and Isabella appealed to the pope, who set the line of control between Spain and Portugal at 350 miles west of the Cape Verde Islands. João thought this too limiting and in 1494 secured through subsequent negotiations in the Spanish town of Tordesillas a new treaty that placed the dividing line 950 miles further west.<sup>28</sup> This redrawing meant that Brazil would become

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<sup>22</sup> Richard Humble, *The Explorers* (Alexandria, Virginia: Time-Life Books, 1978), 19. This cape was known as Cape Bojador in the fifteenth century, but Peter Russell shows quite clearly that the place was actually today's Cape Juby in southern Morocco. The modern Cape Bojador is in the Western Sahara but this is not the point Eanes reached in 1434. Russell also notes that 1) the Portuguese may not have been the first Europeans to sail to this part of the world since the French may have been there earlier in the century; and 2) it was in the Moroccans' interest to feed European impressions of the dangers of "Cape Bojador" as a way of protecting their overland trade. See Russell, *Prince Henry "the Navigator,"* 111-116, 129-130.

<sup>23</sup> Terms with an asterisk in the text are defined in the glossary.

<sup>24</sup> A. R. Disney, *A History of Portugal and the Portuguese Empire*, Volume 2 (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 33-37. Cão probably died on the return voyage of the final trip in 1486, but many of the details of his voyages have been lost because the surviving records are fragmentary. At some point between the mid-1440s and the early 1470s, the Portuguese learned that if they tacked northwest from the African coast until they reached the latitude of the Azores, they could pick up the westerly winds that would take them to the Portuguese coast. This shortened the return trip considerably. See Philip Curtin, Steven Feierman, Leonard Thompson, and Jan Vansina, *African History* (New York: Longman, 1984), 185.

<sup>25</sup> Crowley, *Conquerors*, 26. João rejected Columbus' bid because Columbus wanted exclusive control over his discoveries. See Newitt, "Introduction," *The Portuguese in West Africa, 1415-1670*, 10.

<sup>26</sup> A. J. R. Russell-Wood, "Patterns of Settlement in the Portuguese Empire, 1400-1800," *Portuguese Oceanic Expansion, 1400-1800*, 164-165. The death of Castile's Enrique IV in 1474 left two female claimants to the throne: Isabella I and Juana, who was the niece of Portuguese king Afonso V. Afonso married his niece and declared war on Castile in May 1474.

<sup>27</sup> Newitt, "Introduction," *The Portuguese in West Africa, 1415-1670*, 9.

<sup>28</sup> Humble, *The Explorers*, 91.

Portuguese instead of Spanish. It was João's greatest legacy; he died legally childless just sixteen months later.<sup>29</sup>

João's premature death at forty had serious repercussions for Albuquerque. Because João mistrusted his cousin, Manuel I and refused to endorse his succession,<sup>30</sup> Albuquerque's close association with João was deeply suspect. His advice unwanted, Albuquerque left the court and returned to Morocco where he spent the next eight years.<sup>31</sup> With the coastal regions secured by Portuguese forts, much of Albuquerque's energy was devoted to raiding the Moroccan interior for grain, sheep, and men who could be sold or ransomed. Portuguese success was facilitated by the political and economic disarray northwest Africa experienced in the late fifteenth century.<sup>32</sup> The Muslims, bickering among themselves and unable to combat the economic changes Portugal's maritime exploits produced, were at their nadir. Protecting Lusitanian interests in Africa was essential work since through the course of the 1480s Portugal's African trade in gold, slaves, grain, and textiles generated enough income for the treasury that João II was able to stabilize Portugal's currency before his death.<sup>33</sup> In fact, 45% of the Crown's total revenues in the late fifteenth century came from Portugal's growing empire.<sup>34</sup>

When Vasco da Gama's returned from his first trip to India in 1499, Manuel I quickly organized larger and better-prepared fleets to make the seven-month voyage to the subcontinent. There were departures in February or March 1500, 1501, and 1502. Needing experienced commanders for the growing overseas enterprise, Manuel put aside his suspicions about Albuquerque, and in early 1503 gave him command of three ships to travel to the Malabar coast and establish a fort at Cochin.<sup>35</sup> Albuquerque's cousin, Francisco de Albuquerque, commanded three additional ships, but neither man was given overall command of the venture because of Manuel's deep suspicion of concentrated power.<sup>36</sup> Afonso departed from Belém first, in early April, but arrived in Cochin two weeks after Francisco did, having encountered such foul weather that he lost one of his three ships. Upon his arrival, Afonso learned that Francisco had not only gained the glory of a battle but had already purchased all the pepper available in the city.<sup>37</sup> That annoyed the ever-competitive Afonso considerably since pepper was the essential commodity that drove the spice trade. Although there were far more exotic spices grown in Asia, pepper was the most well-known and commonly used Asian spice: its mass appeal made it particularly profitable. What had once been hoarded by Roman emperors and used as currency<sup>38</sup> had become an almost obligatory part of aristocratic tables by the eleventh century.<sup>39</sup> By the early fifteenth century

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<sup>29</sup> João II had one legitimate son, Prince Afonso, but the prince died in a riding accident on July 12, 1491. João also had one illegitimate son, Jorge de Lencastre (1481—1550), but João was never able to secure his legal recognition. Therefore, when Joao died on October 25, 1495, the throne passed to João's cousin, Manuel I.

<sup>30</sup> Disney, *A History of Portugal and the Portuguese Empire*, Volume 1, 136-137.

<sup>31</sup> Villiers, "Introduction," *Albuquerque: Caesar of the East*, 4.

<sup>32</sup> R. Montran, "North Africa in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries," *The Cambridge History of Islam*, Volume 2, P. M. Hold, Ann K. S. Lambton, and Bernard Lewis (eds.) (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 1970), 238-239.

<sup>33</sup> M. Malowist, "The Struggle for International Trade and Its Implications for Africa," *General History of Africa, Volume V: Africa from the Sixteenth to the Eighteenth Century* (Berkeley, California: University of California Press/UNESCO, 1984), 3.

<sup>34</sup> Jorge M. Pedreira, "Costs and Financial Trends in the Portuguese Empire, 1415-1822," *Portuguese Oceanic Expansion, 1400-1800*, 54.

<sup>35</sup> Cochin is known today as Kochi.

<sup>36</sup> Crowley, *Conquerors*, 162-163.

<sup>37</sup> Crowley, *Conquerors*, 125.

<sup>38</sup> Andrew Dalby, *Dangerous Spices* (London: British Museum Press, 2000), 91.

<sup>39</sup> Jack Turner, *Spice: The History of Temptation* (Alfred A. Knopf, New York, 2004), 101.

what had once belonged to dukes and counts had become an expectation for much of the peasantry. In fact, in 1400 it was possible for a skilled craftsman in England to buy a half a pound of pepper with a day's wages.<sup>40</sup> Most of this pepper came from the Malabar Coast, which is why Manuel I recruited Afonso and ordered him and Francisco to build a fortress in Cochin to protect Portugal's commercial interests. By late January 1504, Afonso and Francisco had done so with the consent of the local ruler, and Afonso had obtained the pepper he needed from a nearby port.<sup>41</sup> He set sail for home on January 25 and arrived in Lisbon's port of Belém in late July, having stopped in the Cape Verde Islands to repair his leaky ships. Francisco left the Malabar coast February 5, but he and his men were never heard from again: they became a part of the 35% of sailors who left Lisbon and failed to return.<sup>42</sup>

Once in Lisbon, Albuquerque and Manuel I developed a geopolitical strategy to further Portuguese interests in the Indian Ocean. In this, Portugal adopted an approach which differed considerably from the way Spain initially approached its newly claimed lands. For voyages to the Spanish New World, private individuals like Columbus had to finance their voyages on their own; the crown only provided the necessary permission to travel. For the Portuguese, however, the state held the monopoly; it provided all of the necessary financing, took all of the risk, and retained most of the profits. The crown was the entrepreneur.<sup>43</sup> In an effort to promote this state monopoly, Manuel wanted to eliminate as much competition as possible. As he told the court in February 1505, Portugal's goal was to impose its power thoroughly in the Indian Ocean so that "all India should be stripped of the illusion of being able to trade with anyone but ourselves."<sup>44</sup> To accomplish this, Portugal would establish a series of trading stations and fortresses along Africa's eastern coast, in the Middle East, and on India's western coast, and would use its superior navy to patrol all maritime traffic. It was a remarkably bold initiative for a small country whose geographers just twenty years before had believed, like Ptolemy, that the Indian Ocean was a landlocked sea.

To execute this strategy, Manuel outfitted a fleet in February 1506 for Albuquerque and his cousin, Tristão da Cunha. True to form, Manuel appointed Cunha as the overall commander of the operation, but gave Albuquerque secret instructions that appointed him governor of India three years hence.<sup>45</sup> Manuel also gave Albuquerque authority to govern over Portuguese interests in the western half of the Indian Ocean in the meantime. These incentives certainly helped to soothe Albuquerque's sizable ego. There were, however, significant delays in the fleet's departure from Belém and in its progression through the Atlantic.<sup>46</sup> In fact, by the time the fleet arrived in the Indian Ocean, they had missed the favorable seasonal winds that could take them to India.<sup>47</sup> There

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<sup>40</sup> Turner, *Spice*, 138.

<sup>41</sup> This port was Coulão, today's Kollam, which is 80 miles south of Cochin. See [Braz] Afonso de Albuquerque, *The Commentaries of the Great Afonso Dalboquerque*, Volume 1, Walter de Gray Birch (trans.) (London: The Hakluyt Society, 1875), 8-10.

<sup>42</sup> [Braz] Afonso de Albuquerque, *The Commentaries*, Volume 1, 17-19; and Crowley, *Conquerors*, 130. At times the fatality rates were much higher. In 1571 of the 4,000 men who left Lisbon, only 2,000 arrived in Goa. See C. R. Boxer, *Four Centuries of Portuguese Expansion, 1415-1825: A Succinct Survey* (Berkeley, California: University of California Press, 1969), 20.

<sup>43</sup> Diffie and Winius, *Foundations of the Portuguese Empire, 1415-1580*, 311-312; and Thomas, *Rivers of Gold*, 160, 167, 226.

<sup>44</sup> Manuel I, quoted in Crowley, *Conquerors*, 138.

<sup>45</sup> [Braz] Afonso de Albuquerque, *The Commentaries*, Volume 1, 20. This meant that the appointment as governor was for 1509.

<sup>46</sup> These delays included an outbreak of plague, difficulties procuring pilots, and tussles between Albuquerque and Cunha. See Crowley, *Conquerors*: 163-165.

<sup>47</sup> In the spring and summer months, warm air over the Indian subcontinent rises, drawing moisture to the land and generally creating humid, monsoonal winds which blow from the southwest to the northeast. In the fall



was still time, however, to make contact with the Christian community on Socotra Island at the mouth of the Gulf of Aden. When Cunha and Albuquerque arrived off Socotra in July 1507, “with flags flying from all the ships in holiday trim” and an honorary artillery salute, they were surprised to find the island’s fort was occupied by Muslims.<sup>48</sup> The anticipated joyful reunion of long-separated Christians turned into a seven-hour, ultimately successful, battle for a fortress. The next day Cunha, Albuquerque, and all their men followed a Franciscan priest in a procession to the island’s main mosque to reconsecrate it as a Christian church. The priest began his exorcism as his ecclesiastical predecessor had in 1415 in Ceuta, when the Portuguese first conquered an overseas possession from the Muslims. A cauldron of salt and water was prepared and a prayer recited:

Almighty God, we piously ask that with your infinite mercy you will bless and sanctify this salt, which by your holy grace you have given for the health and the benefit of the human race. Almighty God, we piously ask that with your infinite mercy you will bless and sanctify this water, which by your holy grace you have given for the health and the benefit of the human race.<sup>49</sup>

The salted water was then spread around the newly-christened Our Lady of the Victory, an altar raised, and mass held.<sup>50</sup> This important business taken care of and Socotra secured,

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and winter, the situation is reversed with rising ocean air drawing cooler air from the land and generally creating dry winds which blow from the northeast to the southwest. Traders traveled between the Arabian peninsula and India in accordance with the prevailing winds. The 1506 fleet arrived off the Mozambique coast too late to take advantage of this cycle. During the Atlantic portion of the voyage, part of the fleet discovered a group of remote islands in the South Atlantic that they named after Tristão da Cunha; Albuquerque was the one who suggested that the largest island in the group be named after Cunha. [Braz] Afonso de Albuquerque, *The Commentaries*, Volume 1, 24.

<sup>48</sup> [Braz] Afonso de Albuquerque, *The Commentaries of the Great Afonso Dalboquerque*, Volume 1, Walter de Gray Birch (trans.) (London: The Hakluyt Society, 1875), 45.

<sup>49</sup> Gomes Eanes de Zurara, quoted in “The Portuguese Celebrate Mass in the Mosque in Ceuta, 1415,” *The Portuguese in West Africa, 1415-1670*, 27.

<sup>50</sup> [Braz] Afonso de Albuquerque, *The Commentaries*, Volume 1, 52. Albuquerque says that the priest was a member of the Order of St. Francis, Father Antonio do Loureiro. More commonly, however, the priests

Cunha left Albuquerque with six dilapidated and decaying ships and four hundred men to secure the seas between Mozambique and Iran; Albuquerque's only advantages were superior firepower, the capture of an excellent Arab pilot on Socotra, and his own righteous certainty.<sup>51</sup>

These assets, as well as Albuquerque's willingness to employ brutal methods to enforce his will, were put to considerable use over the next seven weeks as he made his way along the Arabian coast towards the *entrepôt* of Hormuz to put an end to Muslim trading through the Persian Gulf.<sup>52</sup> At the town of Curiate, for example, the Portuguese suppressed the inhabitants and then looted the city, collecting "as much spoil as they could carry," before setting fire to

some houses in which the bulk of the supplies were, to prevent the Moors [*sic*] from making use of them; and the fire was so fierce that there was not a house, not a building, nor the mosque, which was one of the most beautiful ever seen, left standing. [Albuquerque] ordered also that they should cut off the ears and noses of the Moors who were captured there, and then send them away to Hormuz to bear witness to their disgrace.<sup>53</sup>

Similarly, in Muscat, when Albuquerque perceived the Arabs to have reneged on their promise to become Manuel's vassals by not providing everything that Albuquerque asked of them, he attacked the city, giving no quarter. Not only did the Portuguese pursue women retreating to the hills to kill them, but women and children found hiding in their homes were put to the sword. The city's large mosque, built of finely carved timber, had its supports cut out from underneath before being set on fire, and thirty-four ships in Muscat's harbor were set ablaze. Albuquerque's final order before disembarking was once again that the remaining prisoners have their ears and noses cut off.<sup>54</sup> He wanted some left alive to be able to tell of the terror the Portuguese instilled.



There were times, however, when Albuquerque's contact with Muslims did not turn violent. In the port of Calayate for example, Albuquerque refused to accept the gift of "oranges, lemons, pomegranates, and fowls, and some sheep," from the local governor, despite desperately needing the supplies, because he "would not accept anything from those against whom he would have to declare war if they refused to be

accompanying Portuguese ships were Dominicans. See Pamila Gupta, *The Relic State: St. Francis Xavier and the Politics of Ritual in Portuguese India* (Manchester, U.K.: Manchester University Press, 2014), 30.

<sup>51</sup> Crowley, *Conquerors*, 163-170, and [Braz] Afonso de Albuquerque, *The Commentaries*, Volume 1, 52.

Unfortunately for the Portuguese, Socotra proved to be too far from the Arabian coast to be of much use in monitoring non-Portuguese trade. See Diffie and Winius, *Foundations of the Portuguese Empire, 1415-1580*, 235.

<sup>52</sup> Albuquerque's original orders were to take Aden and block maritime traffic out of the Red Sea, but Albuquerque made the decision on his own to go to Hormuz instead.

<sup>53</sup> [Braz] Afonso de Albuquerque, *The Commentaries*, Volume 1, 71. Curiate is known today as Qurayat, Oman.

<sup>54</sup> [Braz] Afonso de Albuquerque, *The Commentaries*, Volume 1, 73-74, 79, 82.

vassals of the King of Portugal.”<sup>55</sup> The governor responded by strategically suggesting that Albuquerque proceed to Hormuz and leave Calayate unharmed; if the Portuguese were unable to reach an agreement with the King of Hormuz, who ruled Calayate, then Calayate would become Manuel’s vassals instead. Albuquerque agreed to this proposal but insisted upon paying for the supplies Calayate’s residents had provided.<sup>56</sup> Albuquerque was certainly brutal, but he was also relentlessly scrupulous in his transactions. This is why the southeastern frieze on Albuquerque’s commemorative statue in Belém shows him refusing Muslim gifts with resolute conviction, much to the astonishment of the gift-givers. As Albuquerque wrote in 1513 about a similar encounter, “The messenger...then came back with a present of lemons, oranges, chickens, and lambs. I was doubtful about accepting them and said that it was not my habit to receive presents from rulers of cities with whom we had not concluded treaties of peace.”<sup>57</sup>

When Albuquerque’s six ships crossed the Straits of Hormuz to the island of Hormuz near the Iranian shore in late September 1507, they found Hormuz’s harbor full of vessels, including 200 oared galleons and fifty armed vessels. The largest ship was the *Meri*, which belonged to the King of Cambay and carried a thousand men. Albuquerque quickly found his squadron surrounded, and, when he became convinced that the Muslims were about to attack with their clear numerical advantage, he ordered a bombardment with large cannons. The opening salvo sunk two key ships and Albuquerque engaged the *Meri* in a fierce battle. As the Muslim response collapsed, with men throwing themselves overboard, the Portuguese boarded small boats. In his report to Manuel, Albuquerque noted that men in the skiffs “killed countless of [the Muslims] in the water.” In fact, “there was one man that day who killed eighty men in the sea.” Then, “having vanquished the fleet, we went in pursuit of the galleons...and we captured thirty of them, killing many of their men, and then setting them on fire, casting them loose and watching them drifting out to sea ablaze.”<sup>58</sup> The representatives of the infant king of Hormuz quickly sued for peace, and Albuquerque “accepted their surrender of the kingdom and took possession of it.” He then “ordained that the king should rule in the name of the king of Portugal” and imposed a steep annual tribute on the kingdom to be paid in gold, silver, and pearls.<sup>59</sup>

Albuquerque’s men profited handsomely from the capture of Hormuz and the looting of other ports in the region. In fact, it took them eight days to retrieve all the valuables from the 900 men that were floating in the bay in the aftermath of the battle.<sup>60</sup> These men did not, however, share their commander’s conviction that it was necessary for the Portuguese to construct a fortress in Hormuz to protect the crown’s long-term interests. Albuquerque was insistent that the fortress be built, however, and ordered the captains of the other ships to participate in the manual labor. This infuriated the captains, who took the order as an insult to their honor. After four crewmen deserted and converted to Islam in order to escape the work, Albuquerque flew into a rage, opened fire on the city’s walls, poisoned its cistern by filling it with human corpses and dead horses, and attacked one of his captains for disobeying

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<sup>55</sup> [Braz] Afonso de Albuquerque, *The Commentaries*, Volume 1, 63. Calayate is known today as Qalhat, Oman.

<sup>56</sup> [Braz] Afonso de Albuquerque, *The Commentaries*, Volume 1, 65.

<sup>57</sup> Afonso de Albuquerque to Manuel I, December 4, 1513 in *Albuquerque: Caesar of the East*, 211, 213.

<sup>58</sup> Afonso de Albuquerque to Manuel I, November 1507 in *Albuquerque: Caesar of the East*: 55.

<sup>59</sup> Afonso de Albuquerque to Manuel I, November 1507 in *Albuquerque: Caesar of the East*, 57. At the time of Albuquerque’s arrival, the government was in the hands of royal eunuchs because internal rivalries had reduced the royal family to a collection of infants, women, and blind men. See Valeria Fiorani Piacentini, “Salghur Shāh, Malik of Hormuz, and His Embargo of Iranian Harbours (1475-1505), *Revisiting Hormuz: Portuguese Interactions in the Persian Gulf in the Early Modern Period*, Dejanirah Couto and Rui Manuel Laureiro (eds.) (Wiesbaden, Germany: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2008), 12.

<sup>60</sup> Afonso de Albuquerque to Manuel I, November 1507 in *Albuquerque: Caesar of the East*, 57.

an order.<sup>61</sup> In January 1508, three of the six Portuguese captains mutinied, believing that Albuquerque had become unstable and was unfit for command; they sailed from Hormuz for Cochin, where they planned to petition the viceroy for amnesty in the wake of Albuquerque's unwarranted behavior. Left with only three ships and facing a fast-approaching Muslim fleet from other parts of the Persian Gulf, Albuquerque had no choice but to abandon Hormuz. He returned to Socotra Island to resupply the men stationed there and then sailed to India to defend the charges against him and to claim his governorship.<sup>62</sup> Many surprises awaited.



Hinduism is not an indigenous term to India; it is the designation those from outside the subcontinent use to describe the eclectic combination of faith, social standing, and custom which dominates much of India today and which derives its heritage from traditions going back thousands of years. Though notoriously difficult to define,<sup>63</sup> Hinduism may be seen as a system and as a way of life, rather than just a theological belief. Hinduism is about faith, and it is about social order; Hinduism is about religion, and it is about society.

The reason for this dual nature rests in the concept of reincarnation. All living things are judged by their actions, or karma, and upon death are evaluated accordingly. Those who have lived an honorable life—a life lived in accordance with the universal law or dharma—will be reincarnated more prosperously, while those who have not will be reborn with less wealth, or less intelligence, or less opportunity. The better people behave, the better their next life will be; the less pure their actions, the worse their next life will be. Hindu society in India codifies the concepts of karma and dharma in the caste system. The caste system is a social hierarchy in which those born to parents of a certain status become a part of that same group and cannot change their societal position through the course of their lives, regardless of ability or circumstance or even luck. Therefore, the son of a priest becomes a priest; the daughter of a slave remains a slave her whole life.

Like most Hindus today, those in the sixteenth century had a faith in a Creator or universal Supreme Being, often known as Brahma, but they emphatically embraced the multitude of forms God can take. For Hindus, the greatest expression of the divine is found in the almost infinite expression of multiplicity. It is in God's diversity that faith is revealed. In fact, it may be better to think about "hinduisms" instead of Hinduism as a unified system since so many different traditions can be found within the vast subcontinent.<sup>64</sup> It is also true, however, that most sixteenth century Hindus focused on one of these forms above all others. The founders of the Vijayanagara Empire, for example, were followers of Shiva.<sup>65</sup> Shiva is frequently known as the Destroyer, but he is also seen as the deity of sexuality and self-control, of life-giving rains and terrible storms, of poisonous herbs and healing. He is frequently represented either

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<sup>61</sup> [Braz] Afonso de Albuquerque, *The Commentaries*, Volume 1, 141-143, 160, 165, 173, 177, 188.

<sup>62</sup> [Braz] Afonso de Albuquerque, *The Commentaries*, Volume 1, 195. On the voyage to India from Socotra, Albuquerque also returned briefly to Hormuz and imposed a temporary blockade.

<sup>63</sup> Wendy Doniger, *The Hindus: An Alternative History*, (New York: Penguin Group, 2010), 24-28. In 2014, this book was found by an Indian court to be in violation of the nation's blasphemy law and Penguin withdrew the work from publication in India and pulped the remaining copies. See Wendy Doniger, "Banned in Bangalore," *New York Times*, March 6, 2014, A24, ProQuest Historical Newspapers; and Ellen Barry, "A Book Vanishes, Rattling India's Intellectuals," *New York Times*, February 16, 2014, 1, ProQuest Historical Newspapers.

<sup>64</sup> Kim Knott, *Hinduism: A Very Short Introduction* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 2.

<sup>65</sup> The Vijayanagara Empire was founded in 1336; the Sangamas Dynasty (1336-1485)'s family deity was Virupaksha, a form of Shiva. See Catherine B. Asher and Cynthia Talbot, *India Before Europe* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 64.

as a bull or as a figure dancing in a ring of fire, but he is also symbolized by the *linga*—a phallus-shaped object placed at the center of his temples. Taken together, these traits and symbols embrace the notion of balance and emphasize the idea that it is only through destruction that a truly new beginning can occur. Like a pine cone needing a forest fire to release new seeds, destruction is the basis of creation. Another important form of God in the Hindu pantheon is Vishnu. Vishnu is generally more loved than feared for he is frequently known as the Preserver.<sup>66</sup> Vishnu helps maintain the balance in the world between good and evil, between right and wrong, and as a result of this responsibility, he has had to intervene in earthly affairs nine times, taking a different form each time. The rulers of Vijayanagara recognized the equilibrium Vishnu provides when they constructed a large temple to one of Vishnu's avatars, Lord Rama. In addition to these two cults, the followers of Shiva and Vishnu may also subscribe to a multitude of other expressions of God, including female forms and local deities. This is why the towers of Hindu temples and gates feature a plethora of statues to represent this diversity.

The second largest religious community on the Malabar Coast, the Muslims, held very different beliefs. In fact, it is difficult to imagine two more divergent assumptions about the nature of God than those that exist between Hindus and Muslims. In Islam, the fundamental tenets and the religious rituals are clear and succinct in comparison with Hinduism, as evidence by the Five Pillars of the Muslim faith:

**Shahada:** publicly proclaiming, "There is no god but God and Muhammad is the only true messenger of God;"

**Salah:** praying five times a day in direction of Mecca in a prescribed manner;

**Zakat:** providing alms to the poor;

**Sawm:** fasting during daylight hours during the month of Ramadan;

**Hajj:** making the *hajj* or pilgrimage to Mecca, if financially able to do so.

These pillars emphasize the unity of both faith and experience: all who know God must know God in the same way and be able to demonstrate this knowledge in the same manner. For a Muslim, the greatness of God rests in His unifying singularity and in the purity of Muhammad's message that he was God's last and final prophet.

There were other religious groups on the Malabar Coast, including small communities of Jews and Jains,\* but it was the presence of a group of Christians that drew Portuguese attention. The St. Thomas Christians trace their church's history to its apostolic origins, when the Apostle Thomas brought Christianity to India and began converting people of all castes. Tradition holds that he also established seven churches on the Malabar Coast, and the church successfully maintained contact with Christian communities in the Middle East from at least the sixth century.<sup>67</sup> By the time of Vasco da Gama's arrival in India, these churches and others

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<sup>66</sup> Westerners often learn that Shiva is counterbalanced by Vishnu. Wendy Doniger notes, however, that the popular notion of a Hindu trinity (Brahma as the Creator, Shiva as the Destroyer, and Vishnu as the Preserver) probably developed as response to Christianity: "The idea that Brahma is responsible for creation, Vishnu for preservation or maintenance, and Shiva for destruction does not correspond in any way to the mythology, in which both Vishnu and Shiva are responsible for both creation and destruction and Brahma was not worshiped as the other two were." See Doniger, *The Hindus*, 384.

<sup>67</sup> While apostolic succession cannot be proven, the evidence for its validity is similar to that for St. Peter and St. Paul. The seven churches are at Cranganore, Quilon, Paravur, Kokkamangalam, Niranam, Palayur and Cayal. The St. Thomas Christians are also known as Syriac Christians. See Samuel Hugh Moffett, *A History of Christianity in Asia, Volume I: Beginnings to 1500* (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1998), 31, 34, 501; Ian Gillman and Hans-Joachim Klimkeit, *Christianity in Asia before 1500* (Ann Arbor, Michigan: University of Michigan Press, 1999), 159. Interestingly, Western Europe may have first learned of these Christians when a

in South India had 70,000 to 100,000 members<sup>68</sup> but the Portuguese struggled to see them as fellow Christians because so many of their liturgical practices differed from those of early modern Catholicism.<sup>69</sup> One of the most disturbing local conventions centered on the lack of images or statues in St. Thomas churches. To Catholic eyes, the absence of figures revealed an insufficient respect for the Virgin Mary and the saints.<sup>70</sup> These churches were also suspect because of their decorative similarity to mosques and the absence of human iconography. This dissonance the Portuguese experienced upon entering the churches of St. Thomas led them to draw erroneous conclusions about Hindu temples. They repeatedly mistook the statuary in Hindu temples to be representations of a schismatic Christian sect. They saw Brahma, Shiva, and Vishnu as a form of the Holy Trinity and drew other parallels based on their own faith and experience.<sup>71</sup> As one member of Vasco da Gama's crew wrote,

They took us to a large church....In the center of the body of the church rose a chapel, all built of hewn stone, with a bronze door sufficiently wide for a man to pass, and stone steps leading up to it. Within this sanctuary stood a small image which they said represented Our Lady....Many other saints were painted on the walls of the church, wearing crowns. They were painted variously, with teeth protruding an inch from the mouth, and four or five arms.<sup>72</sup>

It was in this unique religious mix on the western coast of India that Albuquerque sought to establish the Portuguese trading monopoly. Doing so required him to reconsider his usual geopolitical equation, for India was more than just another battlefield between Catholics and Muslims.



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man claiming to be "Patriarch John" arrived in Rome and spoke to Pope Calixtus II in 1122 about a wealthy Christian land in India where St. Thomas awoke each year to bless the faithful. See Keagan Brewer, "Introduction," *Prester John: The Legend and its Sources* (Farham, U.K.: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2015), 4-6.

<sup>68</sup> Alexander Henn, *Hindu-Catholic Encounters in Goa: Religion, Colonialism, and Modernity* (Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 2014), 22 and Samuel Hugh Moffett, *A History of Christianity in Asia, Volume II: 1500-1900* (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 2005), 5.

<sup>69</sup> The division of Christianity between Catholicism and Orthodox Christianity connects directly to the dissonance the Portuguese experienced. This division and its consequences are explored at length in Chapters B and C.

<sup>70</sup> Moffett, *A History of Christianity in Asia, Volume II: 1500-1900*, n.p. (chapter 1), Google Books. Some St. Thomas Christian churches did have images of certain animals, like peacocks.

<sup>71</sup> The Portuguese chronicler Duarte Barbosa (1480-1521), for example, wrote that the Hindu priests "hold the number three in great reverence; they hold that there is God in three persons, who is not more than one....They honor the Trinity and would, as it were, desire to depict it. The name which they give it is Bermabesma Maceru, who are three persons and only one God, whom they confess to have been since the beginning of the world. They have no knowledge nor information concerning the life of our Lord Jesus Christ." Duarte Barbosa, *The Book of Duarte Barbosa*, Volume II, Mansel Longworth Dames (ed. and trans.) (London: Hakluyt Society, 1921), 37. Bermabesma Maceru is Brahma, Vishnu, and Shiva. Part of the reason for this misidentification rests in the "very human, and humane, desire to find familiar things" when encountering new ones. See M.N. Pearson, *The Portuguese in India* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 116.

<sup>72</sup> Álvaro Velho quoted in Henn, *Hindu-Catholic Encounters in Goa*, 19. According to Henn, the quote is "most likely" from Velho.

Albuquerque's first port of call upon his arrival in India in early December 1508 was Cannanore, where Viceroy Francisco de Almeida was busily making preparations to avenge his son's death at the Battle at Chaul in March 1508.<sup>73</sup> Albuquerque asked Almeida to surrender his office by order of the king but Almeida repeatedly refused, saying that his term did not end until January. Unable to effect the change he wanted, Albuquerque decided there was little to do but head south to the Portuguese base at Cochin as Almeida headed north to Diu to seek his revenge.<sup>74</sup> Eight weeks later, when Almeida arrived in Cochin having obliterated the Egyptian fleet, Albuquerque joined the clergy, officers, and other notables on the beach to welcome and congratulate the viceroy on his tremendous victory at Diu. Almeida snubbed Albuquerque on the shoreline, failing to acknowledge his successor's presence, and proceeded to the church. After mass, Albuquerque confronted Almeida at the entrance to the Cochin fortress:

Sir, seeing that God has given you so complete a victory, and you have avenged the death of your son with so much honour....I beg you of your grace let there be no differences between us, but deliver to me the government of India by these provisions which I here hold from the king.<sup>75</sup>

Almeida steadfastly refused to relinquish his power. Instead, in the following weeks, Almeida indicted Albuquerque on ninety-six charges of gross mismanagement, arrested him, destroyed his house in Cochin, confiscated his household goods, and had him imprisoned in the fort at Cannanore so that he would not be able to interfere with Almeida's work in Cochin. Three months later, in late October 1509, a high-ranking nobleman, Fernando Coutinho, arrived in Cannanore with fifteen ships from Portugal. He freed Albuquerque, sailed to Cochin, and demanded that Almeida surrender his post. Almeida finally gave way.<sup>76</sup> He boarded his ship on November 5 and waited for five days as the cargo and all of his possessions were loaded; it took so long because Almeida took all of the furnishings from the Portuguese headquarters, thereby establishing the tradition that each viceroy or governor needed to provide for all of his own household goods.<sup>77</sup>

Coutinho brought two very specific orders with him from Manuel. The first was that the Portuguese had to punish the city of Calicut—the premier port on the Malabar Coast. Calicut had achieved this position despite the disadvantages of its poor harbor because of the

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<sup>73</sup> The Battle of Chaul in March 1508 pitted an Egyptian fleet of forty-five vessels of differing capabilities against Lourenço de Almeida's 500 men on nine ships with superior guns. In the three-day battle, the Portuguese missed the opportunity to destroy the Egyptian fleet at the outset and subsequently suffered the loss of its flagship, the *São Miguel*; Lourenço was killed by cannon shot; his body was sunk to prevent it from becoming a trophy. The Egyptian victory cost its commander, Musrif Hussain, about 80% of his men and failed to stop Portuguese interference in the spice trade. See Crowley, *Conquerors*, 177-192.

<sup>74</sup> [Braz] Afonso de Albuquerque, *The Commentaries of the Great Afonso Dalboquerque*, Volume 2, Walter de Gray Birch (trans.) (London: The Hakluyt Society, 1877), 1-4. At the Battle of Diu in February 1509, Almeida's fleet obliterated its foe, sinking, capturing, or burning every Egyptian ship. The Mamluk Sultanate's credibility as the defenders of Islam suffered a fatal blow. In the aftermath, Almeida also tortured surviving Egyptians to death and then displayed their dismembered bodies down the coast. See Crowley, *Conquerors*, 201-210.

<sup>75</sup> Afonso de Albuquerque quoted in [Braz] Afonso de Albuquerque, *The Commentaries*, Volume 2, 17.

<sup>76</sup> [Braz] Afonso de Albuquerque, *The Commentaries*, Volume 2, 36, 44, 46-48.

<sup>77</sup> Pedro Dias, "The Palace of the Viceroys in Goa," *Goa and the Great Mughal*, Jorge Flores and Nuno Vassallo e Silva (eds.) (London: Scala Publishers, 2004), 68; and [Braz] Afonso de Albuquerque, *The Commentaries*, Volume 2, 48. Dias' article is about the traditions developed at the Fortaleza Palace in Goa, not Almeida's residence in Cochin, but given how long the loading process took and how reluctant Almeida was to surrender his post, it seems likely that Almeida was the one who established the tradition of removing all valuables and selling off the everyday items, like kitchen utensils, at the end of their tenure in India.

atmosphere its ruler, the zamorin or lord of the ocean, had created. The zamorins were Hindus, but city's commercial establishment was predominately Muslim.<sup>78</sup> Working effectively together, the zamorins and the traders promoted the pepper trade by providing a safe port for all and by not taking advantage of endangered or damaged ships.<sup>79</sup> This allowed Calicut to become so wealthy and strong in the years before the Portuguese arrived that other cities on the coast, such as Cochin and Cannanore, could not sell their pepper on the open market: they had to ship it to Calicut first.<sup>80</sup> The reason Manuel wanted this city punished, however, was as much a matter of pride as it was a matter of economics. Vasco da Gama had been belittled there as a new trader with substandard goods in 1498. Two years later Pedro Álvares Cabral, the discoverer of Brazil and the man who had negotiated the rights for Portugal's first European trading post in India, had witnessed Muslim traders destroy the outpost and murder its staff. Cabral and Manuel blamed the zamorin for the deaths and the damage. On his second trip to India in 1502, da Gama inflicted heavy damage when he bombarded Calicut with Portugal's heavy, state-of-the-art cannons, but this did not make the zamorin become a Portuguese vassal.<sup>81</sup> Manuel wanted complete submission, which is why Fernando Coutinho and Albuquerque set sail for Calicut with twenty ships in January 1510. Even though the zamorin and most of his troops were not in the city, the Portuguese attack did not go well; it quickly devolved into a looting mission. Rather than securing a base of operations, Coutinho focused on reaching the zamorin's palace. This required marching through narrow lanes for three miles from the shore. Albuquerque advised against moving so far away from the fleet's protective cannons, but Coutinho proceeded anyway. He reached the palace with only minor interference. As the looting began, however, the zamorin's reinforcements arrived. The Portuguese were then forced to retreat through the narrow streets as the Indians hailed projectiles down upon them. Coutinho was soon dead and Albuquerque received an arrow in his left arm, a dart in his neck, and a gunshot wound in the chest. His men carried him on a shield back to the beach, where the ships' cannons made an evacuation possible.<sup>82</sup> Calicut had been vandalized but not defeated. Manuel had envisioned something more and Calicut remained a thorn in Portugal's side.

The king's second order was for Portugal to capture Goa.<sup>83</sup> While Cochin was an excellent base for the pepper trade, it was too far south to police Muslim trade along the whole Indian Ocean coast. Portugal needed a permanent presence near its midpoint, and the island of Goa filled that role nicely. A Hindu pirate named Timoji may have also influenced the decision for he provided Albuquerque with a valuable orientation to the Goa region in hopes that he might win a land grant once the Portuguese were in power.<sup>84</sup> What Timoji knew was that Goa sat in the borderland region between the Bijapur Sultanate, which was Muslim, and the Vijayanagara Empire, which was Hindu. The two states had fought incessantly with

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<sup>78</sup> N. Venkataramanayya, "The Kingdom of Vijayanagara," *The Delhi Sultanate*, R. C. Majumdar (ed.) (Bombay: Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, 1967), 418.

<sup>79</sup> Catherine B. Asher and Cynthia Talbot, *India Before Europe* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 78.

<sup>80</sup> Venkataramanayya, "The Kingdom of Vijayanagara," *The Delhi Sultanate*, 418.

<sup>81</sup> Disney, *A History of Portugal and the Portuguese Empire*, Volume 2, 126-127.

<sup>82</sup> Crowley, *Conquerors*, 215-225, and [Braz] Afonso de Albuquerque, *The Commentaries* Volume 2, 63-71.

<sup>83</sup> Diffie and Winius, *Foundations of the Portuguese Empire, 1415-1580*, 248-249. Other historians believe that Albuquerque acted on his own; see, for example, Disney, *A History of Portugal and the Portuguese Empire*, Volume 2, 130.

<sup>84</sup> Teotónio R. De Souza, "Portuguese Impact Upon Goa: Lusotopic, Lusophonic or Lusophilic?" *Creole Societies in the Portuguese Colonial Empire*, Philip J. Havik and Malyn Newitt (eds.) (Newcastle-Upon-Tyne, U.K.: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2015), 201, 204, EBSCOebooks. The land grant holder was known as *jaggirdar*.

one another for generations.<sup>85</sup> When Bijapur captured Goa in 1470, it denied Vijayanagara access to its principal port on the west coast, thereby limiting its access to the Persian and Arabian horses that were so essential for Vijayanagara's military campaigns.<sup>86</sup> Having the chance to correct this problem and form an alliance with Vijayanagara could work to Albuquerque's advantage. He might also further good will by adjusting several Bijapur policies, for the sultanate had imposed crippling policies upon Goa's Hindu population, most of whom were followers of a Shiva cult that rejected the caste system.<sup>87</sup> Under Bijapur's rule of Goa land taxes doubled and payment had to be made in cash instead of in kind. Taxes were also assessed on the village level instead of on the family level. These policies produced profound and unwelcome changes to Goa's predominantly agrarian society.<sup>88</sup> In addition, a new sultan had recently inherited the Bijapur throne and was busy fighting in the interior. Timoji knew Goa was not well defended, and its population was restive. In other words, as a result of a wide variety of cultural, economic, and military factors, the time was right for a Portuguese move.



Albuquerque began cautiously. Rather than simply sail up the five-mile estuary of the Mandovi River and start shelling the town, he ordered the bar sounded at low and high tide to make sure there was sufficient depth to let his fleet pass and sent out teams to reconnoiter the city and its defenses.<sup>89</sup> There were brief skirmishes with the Muslims stationed in the outer defensive towers and earthworks, but when representatives from the city arrived to sue for peace it was clear that Goa would be no

Calicut. This is why the formal surrender of the city on March 1, 1510 was chosen for the northeastern frieze of Albuquerque's commemorative statue in Belém. In it, Albuquerque stands proudly above a turbaned man, who on bended knee offers the governor a silk pillow upon which the keys to the city rest. A crucifix-carrying Dominican friar and a captain bearing the royal standard stand at Albuquerque's shoulders, surrounded by other officers and

<sup>85</sup> In the fifteenth century, Vijayanagara fought the larger Bahmani Sultanate under which Bijapur was simply one of its provinces. By 1500, however, weaknesses in the Bahmani Sultanate allowed Bijapur to become essentially an independent sultanate of its own. The fighting between the Muslim and Hindu states continued. See Asher and Talbot, *India Before Europe*, 57.

<sup>86</sup> Venkataramanayya, "The Kingdom of Vijayanagara," *The Delhi Sultanate*, 297-298.

<sup>87</sup> P.P. Shirodkar, "Socio-cultural Life in Goa During the 16th Century," *Goa and Portugal: Their Cultural Links*, Charles J. Borges and Helmut Feldmann (eds.) (New Delhi: Concept Publishing Company, 1997), 29. Goans were members of the Nath cult. Also known as the Yoga, Siddha or Avadhut cults, it holds that "the Shakti creates the universe, Siva nurtures it, and time destroys it, and Natha brings *mukti* (freedom)."

<sup>88</sup> Pearson, *The Portuguese in India*, 88-89.

<sup>89</sup> In nautical terms, a bar is a long ridge of sand or gravel near the surface of the water that obstructs navigation near the mouth of the river into a harbor. "Sounding the bar" means to measure it.

soldiers with sharpened pikes as the crenelated walls and stout towers of the fortress rise above.<sup>90</sup>

Those walls were not in the prime condition the frieze suggests and upon inspection Albuquerque found them quite wanting. He immediately set both local residents and his soldiers to work to improve the foundations and, as in Hormuz, Albuquerque insisted that the captains participate in the labor.<sup>91</sup> In the end, there was not enough time or sufficient supplies to complete the necessary repair work. When the sultan of Bijapur, Ismael Adil Shah, returned to Goa in April, he did so with an army of 50,000 men, and the Portuguese were eventually forced to abandon the city. Interestingly, the sultan offered Albuquerque peace and the opportunity to construct a fortress elsewhere on the island, but the governor quickly rejected the offer.<sup>92</sup> For him, the city of Goa was an all-or-nothing proposition. This is why in November 1510 Albuquerque returned to Goa with his fleet repaired and supplemented with new ships. He then abandoned caution: with 1,600 men, who were supported by thousands of local inhabitants opposed to Bijapur rule, Albuquerque ordered an assault on the front gate at dawn. His men forced it open and the attack was successful; four days of looting and bloodshed followed. No quarter was given to any Muslim for Albuquerque's "determination was to leave no seed of this race throughout the whole of the island."<sup>93</sup> Those who weren't killed by sword or pike and then fed to the crocodiles were rounded into a mosque before it was set ablaze.<sup>94</sup>



With the capture of Goa, Portugal was well positioned to exert additional pressure on the spice trade, even if Manuel's kingdom was already enjoying considerable success, as statistics from Venice reveal. In 1495, before the Portuguese arrived in India, Venetian merchants purchased 3.5 million pounds of spices in Alexandria, Egypt; ten years later, they could only procure one million pounds. Meanwhile, Portuguese spice imports jumped from less than 250,000 pounds in 1501 to 2.3 million pounds in 1505.<sup>95</sup> Portugal replaced Venice as the main supplier of pepper and other spices for the European market. Albuquerque, however, was not one to settle: that there were *any* spices still passing through the traditional Middle Eastern trading channels was unacceptable to the governor. He had been ordered to establish a monopoly and that is exactly what he intended to do by taking three decisive steps.

First, he sought to control the local coastal trade more effectively. Therefore, all ships had to purchase a *cartaz* or pass which permitted travel between specific points and required ships to stop and pay customs duties at key ports. Along the west coast of India, these taxes ranged from 3.5% in Diu to 8% in Chaul in 1569.<sup>96</sup> Ship captains also had to leave a cash deposit at their point of departure to ensure their return voyage.<sup>97</sup> These regulations, and the

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<sup>90</sup> The depiction of this frieze closely follows the description offered by Albuquerque's son. In it, the flag is "made of white satin with a cross of Christus worked in the centre." See [Braz] Afonso de Albuquerque, *The Commentaries*, Volume 2, 97-98.

<sup>91</sup> [Braz] Afonso de Albuquerque, *The Commentaries*, Volume 2, 101.

<sup>92</sup> Crowley, *Conquerors*, 235; and Diffie and Winius, *Foundations of the Portuguese Empire, 1415-1580*, 252.

<sup>93</sup> [Braz] Afonso de Albuquerque, *The Commentaries of the Great Afonso Dalboquerque*, Volume 3, Walter de Gray Birch (trans.) (London: The Hakluyt Society, 1880), 16.

<sup>94</sup> Crowley, *Conquerors*, 252.

<sup>95</sup> Stanley A. Wolpert, *A New History of India*, 2nd ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982), 138.

<sup>96</sup> Diffie and Winius, *Foundations of the Portuguese Empire, 1415-1580*, 321.

<sup>97</sup> Pearson, *The Portuguese in India*, 38.

capital outlay they required, forced the local merchants into Portuguese hands since they could not make a sufficient profit if they stopped at each required port to pay the necessary fees. Enforced by Portuguese military might, this system discouraged illegal trade, fought piracy, and boosted prices in India and profits in Lisbon. The pass system also applied to Muslims traveling to Mecca on the Hajj, which was particularly offensive since the passes came emblazoned with a picture of the Virgin Mary and Jesus. The fact that even being on a ship holding such a pass could be interpreted as an act of grave idolatry only made the Portuguese presence in the Indian Ocean more resented.<sup>98</sup>

Second, and most ambitiously, Albuquerque sought to establish a real colony in Goa instead of a mere trading fort. This was a very complex process, involving virtually every aspect of society. It began immediately upon Albuquerque's conquest of Goa, when he strongly encouraged his soldiers to marry the widows of the Muslim soldiers, especially those with lighter skin tones.<sup>99</sup> It continued with the governor's decision to cut tax assessments and to preserve traditional legal mechanisms for settling disputes.<sup>100</sup> Albuquerque also sought to encourage the establishment of a lasting colony by making Goa a center for diplomatic and religious life. Albuquerque formally received delegations from Vijayanagara and Gujarat, Iran, and Ethiopia. The setting for the ceremonies would have been modest in the early days of the Portuguese colony, but the diplomatic network these encounters produced rivaled those of many contemporary European monarchs. Eventually it grew so fruitful that one of Albuquerque's successors boasted that he had "spies in all the courts of the kings of India."<sup>101</sup> Significantly, Portuguese became the language of diplomacy throughout Asian ports until the mid-eighteenth century,<sup>102</sup> which meant Portuguese influence extended long after the might of their cannons, thanks to Albuquerque's farsighted efforts. Naturally, Catholicism also played a key role in Albuquerque's vision, but he allowed Hindus to continue practicing their faith with the exception of *sati*, the practice of Hindu women immolating themselves upon their dead husbands' pyres.<sup>103</sup> These policies collectively allowed Albuquerque to write "the peoples of India now realize that we have come to settle permanently in this land, for they see us planting trees, building houses of stone and lime, and breeding sons and daughters."<sup>104</sup>

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<sup>98</sup> Ellison B. Findly, "The Capture of Maryam-un-Zamāni's Ship: Mughal Women and European Traders," *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, Vol. 108, No. 2 (April-June, 1988), 227-238, EBSCOhost.

<sup>99</sup> Pearson, *The Portuguese in India*, 101, 105.

<sup>100</sup> Pearson, *The Portuguese in India*, 94; Diffie and Winius, *Foundations of the Portuguese Empire, 1415-1580*, 332; and Disney, *A History of Portugal and the Portuguese Empire*, Volume 2, 130.

<sup>101</sup> Miguel de Noronha quoted in Anthony Disney, "Portuguese Expansion, 1400-1800, Encounters, Negotiations and Interactions," *Portuguese Oceanic Expansion, 1400-1800*, 297.

<sup>102</sup> Disney, "Portuguese Expansion, 1400-1800," *Portuguese Oceanic Expansion, 1400-1800*, 290.

<sup>103</sup> [Braz] Afonso de Albuquerque *The Commentaries, Volume 2*, 94; and Disney, *A History of Portugal and the Portuguese Empire*, Volume 2, 130. This practice is also called *suttee*. Wendy Doniger notes that: 1) *suttee* may have been symbolic in the Vedic period, but was then later used as scriptural evidence for the actual practice; 2) in the Mughal period Akbar opposed *suttee* but did not ban it; 3) women's motivations for participation in *suttee* varied substantially; and 4) the practice was deeply embedded in cultural understandings of gender. See Doniger, *The Hindus*, 124, 570, 613-614.

<sup>104</sup> Afonso de Albuquerque quoted in C. R. Boxer, *The Dutch Seaborne Empire 1600-1800* (New York: Penguin Books, 1973), 212. Significantly, as the fundamental security of the colony was no longer in question, and as elements of Western civilization became more obvious, racial prejudice increased rather than decreased in Goa. By the late seventeenth century one Jesuit priest wrote, "the Portuguese character...naturally despises all these Asiatic races." See Francisco de Sousa, S.J. quoted in Boxer, *Four Centuries of Portuguese Expansion*, 42. Portuguese men became less willing to marry local women and establish families with them. Similarly, religious accommodation evaporated as European power grew. Religious life became more formalized and doctrinaire: Goa received its first bishop in 1538, its first Jesuits in 1542, and its first representatives of the Inquisition in 1560. These men set higher standards for literacy and liturgy but they also sought to obliterate any resistance to

Another way in which Albuquerque worked to establish a lasting colony in Goa involved the creation of durable governmental systems. This was essential for the long-term success of the colony because the Portuguese kings, fearing the power their viceroys possessed, usually limited their appointments to three-year terms. Therefore, the only way any meaningful knowledge about local conditions could be passed down was through some type of institution run by those who were going to live in a colony long-term. The best way to do this, Albuquerque reasoned, was to try to replicate as far as possible the municipal institutions of Portuguese towns. This would allow colonists to draw upon established traditions and help to recreate the familiar in an unfamiliar land. In Portugal, the *oficiais da camara*, or municipal council, usually consisted of three to four aldermen, two justices of the peace, a town attorney, and representatives of the trade guilds,\* all of whom had voting rights. In addition, market inspectors, the treasurer, the accountant, the ensign bearer, and the sergeant-at-arms attended meetings as non-voting members. All of these officeholders were selected by lot after a rather complex nomination process.<sup>105</sup> In Goa, Albuquerque had to make adjustments for different conditions and fewer eligible office holders. In the end, this municipal council, the first one established in the Portuguese empire, included the three aldermen drawn from the nobility; two ordinary judges; the city prosecutor; and four trade guild representatives. In the largest departure from tradition, a military captain of the city, who was appointed by the crown, also attended and had two votes. Initially all of these men were Iberian born but by the mid-sixteenth century those of mixed Portuguese-Indian heritage also served the city in this way.<sup>106</sup>

Interestingly, the Goa council sought to preserve the political, economic and social rights and privileges European towns had slowly won through the course of the Middle Ages. As viceroy, Albuquerque could not interfere in the day-to-day dealings of the *camara*, and he at least had to listen to the advice the *camara* gave him regarding war strategy, civil defense, monetary policy, and handling those officials who abused their offices. Moreover, Albuquerque had to uphold the free trading rights of council members in all goods except spices, he had to treat them with a dignity usually reserved for members of the royal household, and he had to ensure that the rights and privileges of the Portuguese citizens of Goa were protected.<sup>107</sup> In turn, the Goa council had to promise to provide for the upkeep of basic infrastructure such as walls, roads, and bridges.<sup>108</sup> This may seem excessively bureaucratic and formal for a tiny colony halfway around the world from Lisbon, but it was precisely because of the enormous distances involved that Portuguese monarchs wanted power to be shared between the viceroy and the municipal council. These kings wanted a system of checks and balances which would keep their viceroys accountable, their soldiers loyal, and their civic officials dependent on royal support. From Lisbon's perspective, and

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Catholicism, punishing supposed converts who lived as Hindus at home. In fact, the Inquisition forbade everything from cooking rice without salt to wearing traditional undergarments, from refusing to eat pork to sending gifts at traditional times. These regulations produced 3,800 Inquisition cases in Goa between 1561 and 1623 and 16,172 cases between 1561-1774. See Pearson, *The Portuguese in India*, 120. Those who did not convert also suffered. In 1567, for example, a captain led his force into the Goan countryside raiding and pillaging, spending "nights and nights" destroying 280 temples as part of the iconoclasm movement that swept Goa in the mid-sixteenth century. See Rajiv Malik, "Surviving a Troubled Past, Thriving in a Progressive Present," *Hinduism Today*, 33, 4 (Oct.-Dec., 2011), 19-29, ProQuest Central; and Henn, *Hindu-Catholic Encounters in Goa*, 41-43.

<sup>105</sup> C.R. Boxer, *Portuguese Society in the Tropics: The Municipal Councils of Goa, Macao, Babia and Luanda, 1510-1800* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1965), 5-6.

<sup>106</sup> Boxer, *Portuguese Society in the Tropics*, 34-35.

<sup>107</sup> Boxer, *Portuguese Society in the Tropics*, 13-14. Significantly, the Goa *camara* wrote to the crown at least 10 times between 1520 and 1680 to obtain on-going affirmations of these prerogatives.

<sup>108</sup> Boxer, *Portuguese Society in the Tropics*, 19.

from Albuquerque's as well, this was the best way to keep the profits from the spice trade flowing fast.

Once Albuquerque had secured local maritime traffic and given Goa a colonial foundation, he set his sights upon the third decisive step to secure the Portuguese spice monopoly: capturing two cities that stood as the sentries guarding the opposite doorways for Muslim access to the Indian Ocean. The first was Malacca, which overlooked the strait separating Sumatra from the Malay Peninsula. Ruled by a sultan, it connected Indian Ocean trade with that from the South China Sea because it stood at the edge of two different monsoonal weather systems. In addition, its early leaders promoted peaceful trade, respected cultural differences, discouraged piracy, and built a reputation as a reliable place to transact business.<sup>109</sup> Porcelain, nutmeg, silk, tin, breadfruit, gold, opium, pepper, pomegranates, rice, cotton fabrics, cloves, and rugs intermingled in a Babel of tongues and currencies. It was an *entrepôt* the Portuguese both wanted and needed if Albuquerque and Manuel's dreams were to be secured.

Departing Goa with 18 ships, 900 Portuguese soldiers and 200 Indian mercenaries, Albuquerque set sail in April 1511 to attack an enemy 2,500 miles away through seas he'd never sailed. Seizing a Gujarati merchant ship off the coast of Sri Lanka allowed him to capture knowledgeable navigators to help mitigate the uncertainties,<sup>110</sup> but the inherent difficulty of an amphibious assault on a town with 20,000 defenders remained. That wasn't about to stop the governor: he audaciously announced his arrival in Malacca in early July with trumpets blaring, guns blasting, and flags waving.<sup>111</sup> Negotiations with the sultan quickly froze as Albuquerque refused to discuss terms until twenty Portuguese hostages, captured during Portugal's first visit to Malacca in 1509, had been released, but the sultan refused to release the detainees until Albuquerque promised that he was willing to trade in peace and on equal terms with other parties.<sup>112</sup> The standoff between the two obstinate men lasted until July 24 when Albuquerque made his first attempt to take the city—one designed to capture the bisected city's only bridge. The sultan responded to the assault on the city by leading twenty war elephants with swords swinging from their trunks against the invaders. Two *fidalgos* managed to stab the lead elephant in the eye and belly to stop the charge, but as arrows and poisoned darts flew, Albuquerque's men were not able to secure the bridge and had to return to their ships.<sup>113</sup> Albuquerque's second attempt came on August 10, when his men loaded onto a tall, commandeered junk that drifted with the incoming tide towards the bridge. The height advantage from the junk allowed archers to keep the sultan's troops occupied as the Portuguese disembarked. Soon the defenders were dislodged from their posts, and Albuquerque's men gained control of the bridge. Then the Portuguese dug in, fortified their position, and held it for twenty days until the sultan decided to abandon the city.<sup>114</sup> Once this happened, Albuquerque moved his men out. He had trained them to fight in such situations as a phalanx, a tight, maneuverable rectangular formation of men wielding pikes that did not break formation for individual combat. The phalanx proved to be

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<sup>109</sup> Donald B. Freeman, *The Straits of Malacca: Gateway or Gauntlet?* (Montreal, Canada: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2003), 85-88, EBSCOebooks.

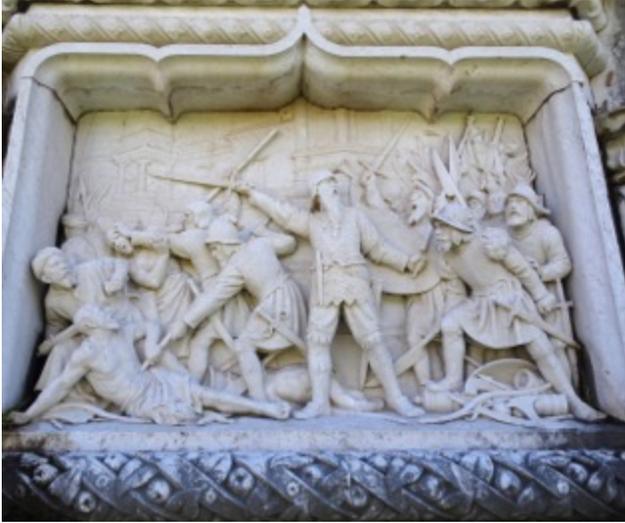
<sup>110</sup> [Braz] Afonso de Albuquerque, *The Commentaries, Volume 3*, 58.

<sup>111</sup> [Braz] Afonso de Albuquerque, *The Commentaries, Volume 3*, 66.

<sup>112</sup> [Braz] Afonso de Albuquerque, *The Commentaries, Volume 3*, 66-67; and Crowley, *Conquerors*, 258-259. Diogo Lopes de Sequeira arrived in Malacca in 1509, but his effort to impose Portuguese dominance was rebuffed and some of his men were captured.

<sup>113</sup> [Braz] Afonso de Albuquerque *The Commentaries of the Great Afonso DAlbuquerque, Volume 3*, Walter De Gray Birch (trans.) (London: Hakluyt Society, 1877), 103-104, 106-108; and Roger Crowley, *Conquerors: How Portugal Forged the First Global Empire* (New York: Random House, 2015), 260-261.

<sup>114</sup> Crowley, *Conquerors*, 263-264.



extraordinarily and brutally effective in taking control of the rest of Malacca and ridding the city of its Muslim population, for as Albuquerque ordered in Curiate, Muscat, and Goa, no quarter was given to any Muslim, regardless of age, profession, or gender.<sup>115</sup> The ruthless purge of Malacca is the scene depicted on the northwestern frieze of Albuquerque's commemorative monument in Belém, although the phalanx formation is not present. Instead, Albuquerque rallies his men to move forward as the noblemen shout their battle cry, "Santiago!" The two *fidalgos* who are already engaged in combat against

men with bows or swords have shoved their pikes into the torsos of two of the city's hapless defenders who scream out in pain, disbelief, and horror. One Muslim man has already decided the fight is hopeless and has turned his back on the scene to flee. There are no women or children depicted in the frieze although they too suffered from the Portuguese wrath. Once the city was secured, Albuquerque authorized the looting of the city "as recompense for past labours." His men had "free power to keep or dispose of everything they took," but they could not touch the property of Malacca's Hindu or Chinese residents.<sup>116</sup>

The plunder from Malacca rivaled that of Hernán Cortés in Mexico and Francisco Pizarro in Peru. Had it not been lost to the sea in a typhoon as Albuquerque sailed for Goa in December 1511, the treasures aboard the flagship *Frol de la Mar* would have made Manuel I the envy of Europe's monarchs.<sup>117</sup> As it was, Albuquerque's prize for Manuel was Portugal's firm command of the eastern doorway to Indian Ocean trade, thanks to the construction of a major fortress at water's edge that was capable of withstanding naval assaults.<sup>118</sup> It was a present of continuous reward—one that would serve Portugal for generations. Little wonder that despite the loss of the *Frol de la Mar*, Albuquerque was able to write to Manuel with pride and confidence:

There is no need for any *naus* [large ship] to be kept permanently in Malacca, other than those you decide should be used for trading in those parts....Your men have left behind them such a good reputation that these pirates will not dare to return as far as the port of Malacca, as they used to in the time of [Muslim] rule.<sup>119</sup>

The construction of the Albuquerque's fortress, known as *A Famosa* (the Famous), defended Portugal's interests in Malacca for 130 years until the city finally fell to the Dutch in 1641.<sup>120</sup>

<sup>115</sup> [Braz] Afonso de Albuquerque, *The Commentaries, Volume 3*, 127; and Crowley, *Conquerors*, 263.

<sup>116</sup> [Braz] Afonso de Albuquerque, *The Commentaries, Volume 3*, 126-127.

<sup>117</sup> Diffie and Winius, *Foundations of the Portuguese Empire, 1415-1580*, 258, 260. Built in 1502, the *Frol de la Mar* was an intimidating 400-ton carrack with forty guns distributed over three decks but after a decade of service, it was in such poor shape that many Portuguese sailors refused to sail it. See Crowley, *Conquerors*, 268.

<sup>118</sup> Freeman, *The Straits of Malacca*, 129-130, EBSCOebooks.

<sup>119</sup> Afonso de Albuquerque to Manuel I, April 1, 1512 in *Albuquerque: Caesar of the East*, 127.

<sup>120</sup> For an account of the Dutch seizure of Malacca in 1641, see Dianne Lewis, *Jan Compagnie in the Straits of Malacca* (Athens, Ohio: Ohio Center for International Studies, Ohio University, 1995), 12-28. Lewis also notes

With the eastern doorway secure, Albuquerque set his sights on the western doorway to the Indian Ocean, the citadel of Aden, near the entrance of the Red Sea. Capturing this port had been a part of Manuel I's instructions to Albuquerque in 1506, but at that point Albuquerque simply didn't have sufficient manpower to conquer the city.<sup>121</sup> The sixteenth-century city was uniquely situated: sitting on the floor of an extinct volcano, Aden was protected on three sides by the crater's tall rim while an intimidating, man-made wall faced the sea on the fourth. The only land access to the city came via an isthmus that flooded at high tide and through a single narrow pass on the northwest side of the crater's rim. Capturing the city required scaling the wall, taking several fortifications and towers, securing the pass, and overcoming Aden's main geographical curse: a lack of water.<sup>122</sup> On Good Friday 1513, Albuquerque and his captains agreed to scale the wall facing the sea in two places and then proceed as quickly as possible to the city gate facing the mountain pass. Controlling this gate was essential because through it the Muslims "could bring so many troops into the city that we would be overwhelmed," Albuquerque noted.<sup>123</sup> The governor was clear that "we needed to fight well" in order to have the plan succeed; if the first assault failed, the Portuguese would have to retreat because they did not have enough fresh water to stay off shore for very long.<sup>124</sup> As dawn broke the next day Albuquerque and his men boarded skiffs and rowed towards the beach. At the last minute the governor changed the battle plan because

it seemed to me that our numbers were too small for scaling the wall and that we had too few ladders....I considered that, if we scaled the walls from two directions, we would not be able to put a body of men on top of them... and accordingly I decided that we should make a joint attack at one spot, so that twice as many men could get to the wall and we could assist one another.<sup>125</sup>

Unfortunately for the Portuguese, this change in strategy did not work. In fact, nothing seemed to go right for them that morning: the landing required the men to get into the water; the gunpowder got wet as they splashed ashore; the *fidalgos* failed to coordinate the placement of the ladders as they competed for the honor of being the first to scale the walls; the ladders were not long enough to quite reach the top of the wall; and the ladders broke and had to be repaired in the middle of the battle. Despite all of these setbacks, about fifty men successfully scaled the wall and some descended to the opposite side and began fighting in the streets.<sup>126</sup> Portuguese cannons even opened a hole in the wall, but the *fidalgos* failed to take advantage of the situation, perhaps because Albuquerque's nephew let his pride get

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that the Portuguese capture of Malacca in 1511 did not end trade all by Malays. Rather, the capture simply fragmented the trade as other ports compensated and developed. It is also important to note that the Malays did not passively accept the Portuguese presence. As Lewis notes on page 9, there were Malay attacks on Malacca in 1517, 1520, 1521, 1558, 170, and 1575.

<sup>121</sup> Diffie and Winius, *Foundations of the Portuguese Empire, 1415-1580*, 237. This is why Albuquerque proceeded to Hormuz instead in 1507.

<sup>122</sup> For more on the Aden's geography, fortifications, and water issues, see Roxani Eleni Margariti, *Aden and the Indian Ocean Trade: 150 Years in the Life of a Medieval Arabian Port* (Chapel Hill, North Carolina: University of North Carolina Press, 2007), 34-52 and 87-94. Portuguese intelligence on Aden in 1513 was so weak that Albuquerque didn't know if Aden was an island or on a peninsula. It was only after the battle, when Albuquerque sailed into the bay to the west of the city, that he learned Aden was on a peninsula. See Afonso de Albuquerque to Manuel I, December 4, 1513 in *Albuquerque: Caesar of the East*, 221.

<sup>123</sup> Afonso de Albuquerque to Manuel I, December 4, 1513 in *Albuquerque: Caesar of the East*, 213.

<sup>124</sup> Afonso de Albuquerque to Manuel I, December 4, 1513 in *Albuquerque: Caesar of the East*, 213.

<sup>125</sup> Afonso de Albuquerque to Manuel I, December 4, 1513 in *Albuquerque: Caesar of the East*, 215.

<sup>126</sup> Afonso de Albuquerque to Manuel I, December 4, 1513 in *Albuquerque: Caesar of the East*, 217.

in the way: António Garcia de Noronha is reported to not have entered the breach because the men already inside the city's walls had already won the glory; without *fidalgos* leadership, none of the other soldiers acted.<sup>127</sup> In contrast, the Muslims defended their city forcefully. By noon, the Portuguese were in full retreat, evacuating to their ships.

In the aftermath of the Aden debacle, Albuquerque admitted that his faulty strategy also played a role in the defeat. As he told Manuel I, "I think that, if I had reconnoitered Aden beforehand, I would not have attacked where we did."<sup>128</sup> Albuquerque remained convinced, however, that not only was Aden conquerable, but that it was essential for Portugal to do so in order to secure the spice monopoly and undermine Arab markets. He noted with satisfaction that merely sailing into the Red Sea had generated panic in Jeddah and Cairo, for in doing so, the Portuguese had "touched them on the raw in the place where they felt most secure."<sup>129</sup> Albuquerque concluded that if Manuel captured Aden and established a fortress on Massawa Island to control the Red Sea trade, "you will have the riches of the whole world in your hands."<sup>130</sup> Such steps would require an investment in ships and manpower, but Manuel's priorities were not exclusively focused upon Asian trade. Instead, the king chose to continue to expand Portugal's presence in Morocco. In 1513, he sent 18,000 troops to capture Azamor; in 1514, he sent 120 ships to facilitate the construction of the nearby Mazagão fortress; and in 1515, he sent 200 ships to the mouth of the Sibu River to build a fortress there.<sup>131</sup> This was the type of support and commitment Albuquerque believed was necessary for the success of the *Estado da Índia*. And that level of commitment only seemed fair since in the 1510s 65% to 68% of the crown's revenue came from the overseas trade, and the taxes generated from the spice trade alone exceeded those from all domestic sources.<sup>132</sup> As he bitterly complained to Manuel,

I also notice, Sire, that you do not send me arms or men or any military equipment....If Your Highness had sent the equipment, the men and the arms with which to carry out your orders, I would neither have had to put my men twice under fire in Malacca and twice in Goa, nor would the [Muslims] have taken control of your fortress which I had begun to build in Ormuz.<sup>133</sup>

Without sufficient support from Lisbon, Albuquerque had little hope of securing the spice trade's western door.



The fourth and final frieze on Albuquerque's memorial in Belém depicts the governor about to instigate a murderous plot in Hormuz in April 1515. In this scene, Albuquerque is walking

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<sup>127</sup> Crowley, *Conquerors*, 291.

<sup>128</sup> Afonso de Albuquerque to Manuel I, December 4, 1513 in *Albuquerque: Caesar of the East*, 255.

<sup>129</sup> Afonso de Albuquerque to Manuel I, December 4, 1513 in *Albuquerque: Caesar of the East*, 257, 259.

<sup>130</sup> Afonso de Albuquerque to Manuel I, December 4, 1513 in *Albuquerque: Caesar of the East*, 257, 259.

<sup>131</sup> Susannah Humble Ferreira, *The Crown, the Court, and the Casa da Índia: Political Centralization in Portugal 1479-1521* (Leiden, Netherlands: Brill, 2015), 145-146, EBSCOebooks. The effort at the Sibu River ended in failure when a changing tide left the Portuguese ships stranded on sandbars; in the subsequent Muslim attack with 3,000 cavalry 30,000 infantry, many members of the Portuguese nobility were captured and then ransomed at high cost. This brought an end to the period of Portuguese expansion in Morocco.

<sup>132</sup> The 65% figure is from 1506 and the 68% figure is from 1518-19. See Disney, *A History of Portugal and the Portuguese Empire*, Volume 1, 147-148.

<sup>133</sup> Afonso de Albuquerque to Manuel I, April 1, 1512 in *Albuquerque: Caesar of the East*, 103, 105.



with considerable gravitas down the steps of a three-tiered dais, having just risen from an ornate and amply upholstered chair that could be mistaken for a throne. A large tapestry hangs on the wall behind it, again drawing attention to the chair as the focal point of the room. Standing immediately at Albuquerque's left is a poised boy holding a partially-obscured sword in his left hand. The man Albuquerque approaches wears a long, double strand of pearls, a bejeweled headdress, and a luxurious sash around his waist. He bows deeply with his arms crossed in front of his chest before the governor. Eight Portuguese *fidalgos* observe this formal, diplomatic interaction with different expressions on their faces: two of them are coldly inscrutable, three have a vague look of anticipation, one has puckered his lips to take a deep breath, and one has just cracked the first hint of a smile. The final observer, with a Cheshire cat grin and knowing glance, reveals that the bowing visitor is about to die.

The memorial's sculptor naturally took some artistic liberties to create this vivid scene, but he did faithfully capture the essence of Albuquerque's overall scheme for April 18, 1515. When the governor arrived in Hormuz on the first of the month, he found the rich city-state in political turmoil: both the young king, Turan Shah, and his chief vizier were at the mercy of a man named Rais Ahmed, who had entered the king's bedroom one night, held a knife to this throat, and forced the young ruler to beg for his life. The king did so and surrendered all meaningful political control to Ahmed.<sup>134</sup> Albuquerque's arrival changed the equation and

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<sup>134</sup> Rais Ahmed always stood next to "the king's chair, holding a short sword, with one hand placed on his dagger" so that "the king would never answer any more than what this man told him." [Braz] Afonso de Albuquerque, *The Commentaries, Volume 4*, 140, 148-149.

allowed Turah Shah to demonstrate a degree of independence: he gave formal permission for the Portuguese to disembark and to construct a stockade between the beach and the palace.<sup>135</sup> Several days later Albuquerque asked to meet with Rais Ahmed and the king. After some diplomatic haggling over the arrangements, they agreed to meet unarmed on neutral ground. Albuquerque ordered that a large reception room of finished earthen walls be built near the beach for this meeting. It was decorated with cloth and “a brocaded dais, furnished with two chairs of crimson velvet, fringed with gold,” as well as benches “covered in cushions for the captains.”<sup>136</sup> When Ahmed arrived at the hall, carrying a sword, dagger, and shield, Albuquerque asked why he had come with weapons. Insulted by the implied lack of trust and the break with Arab custom, Ahmed turned back towards the doorway just as Turah Shah entered. Albuquerque’s men immediately locked the doors behind the king; as Ahmed turned to object, Albuquerque bellowed, “Kill him!” The *fidalgos* daggers impaled Ahmed from all directions, and he was dead before his head hit the floor. Stunned by the quick turn of events, Turah Shah became full of dread that he would be next to fall, but Albuquerque took his hand, reassured the boy, and led him to the dais to sit in the chair as king.<sup>137</sup> The Portuguese had won Turah Shah’s complete loyalty.<sup>138</sup>

Albuquerque then demanded that a Portuguese fortress be built in Hormuz, thereby rectifying the problem his captains created when they mutinied in 1509. The work proceeded through the summer with the men mostly working by torchlight to avoid the blistering heat of the day, but dysentery set in and workers began to die. Albuquerque too fell victim in August, but refused to leave Hormuz until he could be certain that the fort was a viable defensive structure.<sup>139</sup> On November 8 he finally set sail for Goa, slipping away without bidding Turah Shah a formal farewell as a result of his rapidly deteriorating health. He left his nephew, Pero de Albuquerque, in command of the fortress.<sup>140</sup> Off the coast from Calayate, the fleet encountered a ship carrying the news that Manuel I had appointed a new viceroy of India—a man who was from an anti-Albuquerque faction within the court.<sup>141</sup> Heartbroken by the news from Lisbon, the dying governor exclaimed, “It were well that I were gone.”<sup>142</sup> Without the faith of his king, Albuquerque felt his life was over. He had worked so hard to further Portuguese interests in the Indian Ocean and to obtain revenge for Christendom against Islam, but it had not been enough. He had failed to take Aden and without securing the Red Sea, the dream of a Portuguese monopoly in the spice trade could not be realized.

Albuquerque clung to life until his ship approached Goa. He met with his secretary, dictated his last will and testament, and asked to be clothed in the surcoat of Santiago so that he might die in the uniform of a Crusader. He then sipped some Portuguese red wine, called for his confessor, accepted the Last Rights, and was absolved of his sins in the Catholic tradition. As dawn broke on December 15, 1515, Albuquerque asked to be carried to his

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<sup>135</sup> Crowley, *Conquerors*, 307-308.

<sup>136</sup> [Braz] Afonso de Albuquerque, *The Commentaries, Volume 4*, 157.

<sup>137</sup> [Braz] Afonso de Albuquerque, *The Commentaries, Volume 4*, 158-159.

<sup>138</sup> Roger Crowley aptly describes these events as “a perfect coup.” Crowley, *Conquerors*, 311.

<sup>139</sup> Crowley, *Conquerors*, 312-314. For a discussion of the evolution of the fortress, see João Lizardo, “The Evolution of the Fortress of Hormuz up to its Renovation by Inofre de Carvalho,” *Revisiting Hormuz: Portuguese Interactions in the Persian Gulf in the Early Modern Period*, 135-148.

<sup>140</sup> [Braz] Afonso de Albuquerque, *The Commentaries, Volume 4*, 191-192.

<sup>141</sup> Albuquerque’s replacement was Lopo Soares de Albergaria (c. 1460 – c. 1520), who had the opportunity in 1517 to take Aden for the Portuguese and destroy a Muslim fleet at Jeddah but timidly failed to take advantage of either situation. Historian Matteo Salvatore describes the Portuguese court as having an imperial faction and a mercantile faction. Albuquerque and Manuel were imperialists but with Manuel’s death in 1521 the mercantile faction under João III came to dominate. See Matteo Salvatore, *The African Prester John and the Birth of Ethiopian-European Relations, 1402-1555* (New York: Routledge, 2016), 154.

<sup>142</sup> Afonso de Albuquerque quoted in [Braz] Afonso de Albuquerque, *The Commentaries, Volume 4*, 195.

cabin's window so that he might have one last look at the Goan skyline. He died holding a crucifix, thinking of his city and what awaited, both for it and for him, as a tropical breeze blew across the land.<sup>143</sup>



António de Oliveira Salazar began his thirty-six-year rule as Portugal's authoritarian prime minister in 1932.<sup>144</sup> As an integral part of his campaign to instill the values of tradition, morality, and pride in the nation, the Salazar government sought to celebrate 1940 as the Double Centenary of National Independence—the eight hundredth anniversary of Portugal's founding and the three hundredth anniversary of Portugal's regaining its independence after a sixty-year period of Spanish rule.<sup>145</sup> As a part of the observance, the government sponsored the Exposition of the Portuguese World. Like a World's Fair but only involving Portugal, Brazil, and the Portuguese colonies in Africa and Asia, the Exposition was held in Lisbon's Belém neighborhood in the shadows of the sixteenth-century Jerónimos Monastery and near the port from which Eanes, Cão, Dias, Gama, and Albuquerque all sailed. It was a purposefully and unapologetically didactic festival,<sup>146</sup> one designed to help Salazar's people remember Portugal's Golden Age and to witness the nation's recovery from the Republican era (1910-1926). In this way, the 1940 Exposition served the same function as Paris' *Exposition Universelle* of 1900, which sought show France's recovery from the Franco-Prussian War\* or as San Francisco's Panama–Pacific International Exposition of 1915, which attempted to show the city's recovery from the 1906 earthquake.<sup>147</sup> The fair also celebrated the contrast between Portugal's peaceful stability and Spain's recent Civil War and the rest of the continent's descent into World War II.<sup>148</sup> What truly made Salazar's fair exceptional, however, was that its focus was the past instead of the future, for as Salazar said,

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<sup>143</sup> [Braz] Afonso de Albuquerque *The Commentaries of the Great Afonso DAlbuquerque, Volume 4*, Walter De Gray Birch (trans.) (London: Hakluyt Society, 1877), 196.

<sup>144</sup> The degree to which Salazar's government was fascist is a subject of intense historical debate. Labels such as "fascistic," "para-fascist," and "proto-fascist" have been used to note the similarities and the differences. For more detail about the degree that the Portuguese experience fits the fascist model see among other sources David D. Roberts, *Fascist Interactions: Proposals for a New Approach to Fascism and Its Era, 1919-1945* (New York: Berghahn, 2016), 29-30, 131, 138, 194; Robert O. Paxton, *The Anatomy of Fascism* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2004), 150, 217-218; and Ellen W. Sapega, *Consensus and Debate in Salazar's Portugal: Visual and Literary Negotiations of National Text, 1933-1948* (University Park, Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania State University, 2008), 2, EBSCOebooks.

<sup>145</sup> When Portuguese king Sebastião I was killed without an heir in Morocco at the Battle of Alcácer Quibir (1578), he was succeeded by his great uncle Henry who was a cardinal and had served as regent during Sebastião's minority. When Henry died in 1580 without appointing a successor, there was a succession crisis. Spain's Philip II did not have the best claim to the throne but upon sending an army to Lisbon, he secured it. Spanish kings ruled Portugal until 1640 when João IV established the House of Braganza.

<sup>146</sup> Sapega, *Consensus and Debate in Salazar's Portugal*, 25. Sapega also has another article about the Belém site: Ellen W. Sapega, "Remembering Empire/Forgetting the Colonies," *History & Memory*, 20, 2 (Fall/Winter 2008), 18-38, ProQuest Central.

<sup>147</sup> David Corkill and José Carlos Pina Almeida, "Commemoration and Propaganda in Salazar's Portugal: The Mundo Português Exposition of 1940." *Journal of Contemporary History*, 44, no. 3 (July 2009): 381-399, EBSCOhost.

<sup>148</sup> Joana Ramalho, "The *Mise-en-scène* of the Empire: the 1940 Portuguese World Exhibition," *Media and the Portuguese Empire*, José Luís Garcia, Chandrika Kaul, Filipa Subtil and Alexandra Santos (eds.) (Cham, Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017), 209.

Through the centuries and generations, we have always kept alive the same spirit and, in coexistence with the most perfect territorial identity and national identity in Europe, one of the greatest vocations of Christian universalism."<sup>149</sup>

The Age of Exploration, in particular, was glorified with messianic messages, and the value of Portuguese imperialism to the world was reinforced with the government slogan "Portugal: Not a Small Country."<sup>150</sup> To emphasize the connection between the past and the present, the Exposition's paternalistic official guide for visitors explained the optimal way in which the pavilions and exhibits should be viewed. It specifically held, "Your visit should begin at the main entrance, located at Afonso de Albuquerque Square."<sup>151</sup> This meant that the visitors who followed the prescribed plan would begin their exploration of Portugal's past through the lens of Albuquerque's life, looking up at the resolute man staring towards the sea.

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<sup>149</sup> António de Oliveira Salazar quoted in Ramalho, "The *Mise-en-scène* of the Empire," *Media and the Portuguese Empire*, 203.

<sup>150</sup> Corkill and Pina Almeida, "Commemoration and Propaganda in Salazar's Portugal," *Journal of Contemporary History*, 381-399, EBSCOhost; and Felipe Fernández-Armesto, "Portuguese Expansion in a Global Context," *Portuguese Oceanic Expansion, 1400-1800*, 483. The "Portugal Não é um País Pequeno" slogan was shown on maps that superimposed Portugal's colonial possessions on a map of Europe. On this scale, Mozambique, Angola, Portuguese Guinea, São Tomé and Príncipe, Timor, Goa, Diu, Macau and other holdings stretched from Gibraltar to Russia.

<sup>151</sup> *Guia Oficial Exposição do Mundo Português* quoted in Ellen W. Sapega, *Consensus and Debate in Salazar's Portugal*, 30.

