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# Ruralization and Trade in the Eighteenth century Goa: Contextualizing Junta da Real Fazenda

Nagendra Rao\*

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## Resumo

Este artigo analisa a fonte portuguesa Junta da Real Fazenda, colocando-a no contexto historiográfico adequado. A fonte é estudada em três períodos: pré-pombalino, pombalino e pós-pombalino. A economia goesa dependia da economia rural, particularmente nos primeiros anos do século XVIII. As comunidades da aldeia sofreram por falta de receita e o aumento da dívida. No período Pombalino, o domínio jesuíta do sector agrário terminou, tendo sido feitas tentativas para recuperar o comércio. Os comerciantes hindus desempenharam um papel de maior relevância. No entanto, o comércio desta época não pode ser comparado com o comércio que prevaleceu no século XVI. Na era pós-pombalina, verifica-se um maior declínio no sector agrário. Os goeses começaram a migrar para Bombaim. As receitas das remessas substituíram as receitas agrárias e comerciais durante este período.

**Palavras-chave:** Goa, pombalino, comunidades de aldeia, Jesuítas, comércio, século XVIII.

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## Abstract

This paper contextualizes the Portuguese source Junta da Real Fazenda by placing it in the proper historiographical context. The source is studied in three phases: pre Pombaline, Pombaline and post Pombaline eras. The Goan economy depended on the rural economy particularly in the early years of the eighteenth century. The village communities suffered from lack of revenue and enhanced debt. In the Pombaline era, the Jesuit domination of the agrarian sector ended. Attempts were made to revive trade. There was a greater role for the Hindu traders. However, the trade of this era could not be compared with the trade that prevailed in the 16<sup>th</sup> century. In the post Pombaline era, we find further decline in the agrarian sector. Goans began to migrate to Bombay. Remittance revenue replaced agrarian and trade revenue during this period.

**Keywords:** Goa, Pombaline, village community, Jesuits, trade, eighteenth century.

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## **Ruralization and Trade in the Eighteenth century Goa: Contextualizing Junta da Real Fazenda**

**Nagendra Rao**

### **Introduction**

The paper uses the Portuguese document Junta da Real Fazenda (JRF) to understand the nature of the Goan society and economy in the long eighteenth century between 1680 and 1820. Eighteenth century has attracted the imagination of historians of India who participated in the eighteenth-century debate, which argues that there was a crisis in the Indian economy after the fall of the Mughals on the one hand and continuity of the economic prosperity of India on the other (Alavi 2002). Even if we assume that there was no economic crisis in India, we can suggest that in the Portuguese controlled Goa there was a major economic crisis. According to Melo (2012, 143), “The seventeenth and eighteenth centuries are considered as dark years of the Portuguese presence in India, a period of stagnation”. The major factor leading to this crisis was the inability of the Portuguese to compete with the political and military prowess of the Dutch and the English. Consequently, the Portuguese rule in Goa can be segregated into different eras. The first, the age of prosperity prevailed between 1510 and 1600. The second era, however, was the age of decline between 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries. The development of 19<sup>th</sup> century is not the major concern of this paper. However, it is important to know the impact of the economic developments of the previous era on the 19<sup>th</sup> century Goan economy and society.

There have been a large number of works that deal with the role of Portuguese Goa and the global trade in the sixteenth century (Disney 2020). Goa can be characterized as a maritime state and comprising major urban centers of western India. Even though in the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries, the urban centers continued to survive, there was a process of ruralization during this period. While discussing the ruralization process and the attempts made by the Portuguese state to revive trade, this paper contextualizes Goa in the three phases: pre Pombaline, Pombaline and Post Pombaline phases. The sources available in the JRF or the Board of Finance form the major body of sources for this study. The documents provide information regarding land transactions, money lending, and trade. The sources support the contention of ruralization of Goa in the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries. The JRF is

the primary source for this work. This source is used in conjunction with the secondary literature. It is not possible to produce the whole data available in corpus of JRF. Consequently, the data representing a particular trend as discussed in the secondary literature is highlighted. The documents referred here dealt with the financial matters taken up by the state. It did not deal with the financial transactions where state's involvement was not needed. Consequently, it provides one perspective of the economic history of Goa. It deals with the matters that concerned the state. For example, it provides information regarding the money lending and court cases that involved the state. It also contains significant information regarding trade and commerce in the post 1750 period when the state took efforts to revitalize trade, which had lost its vigour that it exhibited in the 16<sup>th</sup> century. This paper argues that there was a transition from the pre Pombaline to the Pombaline period. While in the pre Pombaline era, agricultural production and land-based activities dominated the economic pursuits, in the Pombaline era, an attempt was made to expand agricultural production and trade by obtaining the support of the Saraswat traders. The post Pombaline era exhibited the failure of the Portuguese state to achieve this objective as Goa mainly depended on the remittance income from Bombay.

### **Historiography**

The JRF has some documents that belong to the late 17<sup>th</sup> and the early long 18<sup>th</sup> century. The scholars such as Filipe Nery Xavier (1856), Baden Powell (1900), and Panduranga Pissurlencar (1952) and others have discussed the nature of the Goan rural society. However, they lacked a general framework to analyze the nature of the Goan society even though scholars such as Xavier and Pissurlencar were aware of the exploitative nature of the Portuguese colonialism. In the postcolonial period, however, the scholars such as Teotónio R. de Souza (2009), Pius Malekandathil (2012), Remy Dias (2004), Ernestine Carreira (2014), Rochelle Pinto (2007), and many others discussed the nature of the Goan rural society in the pre Pombaline era. Teotónio R. de Souza analyzed the rural society in the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries. However, he did not discuss the 18<sup>th</sup> century situation. At the same time, the work of Teotónio R. de Souza is important as it provided valuable information regarding the role of the Jesuits, the state-village community relationship, the question of land ownership, and ruralization. Pius Malekandathil discussed the process of ruralization in the 18<sup>th</sup>

and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. However, the works of Teotónio R. de Souza and Pius Malekandathil, when placed in the context of JRF, show that there was a continuity and change between 17<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. Rochelle Pinto's work is useful to understand the nature of the society and economy in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The work of Ernestine Carreira aims to study the relationship between the French and the Portuguese and places Goan history in the global context. It is useful to understand the struggles of the Portuguese in Goa in the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries. Remy Dias has provided relevant information on the nature of the 18<sup>th</sup> century Goa. However, no works have extensively used JRF as a major source for the study of colonial Goa. In this context it becomes important to study JRF as it has some interesting details that substantiate the arguments of the scholars such as Teotónio R. de Souza and Pius Malekandathil.

### **Pre Pombaline era**

Teotónio R. de Souza discussed the changes experienced by the village communities of Goa. It is interesting because the Portuguese generally presented themselves as a trading and military class. According to Souza, the Foral of 1526 issued by the Portuguese official Afonso Mexia, was an important document as it signified the acceptance of the Portuguese to give some autonomy to the village communities. In the process, there was documentation of the land system of Goa (Souza 2009, 34). However, in the late 16<sup>th</sup> century and early 17<sup>th</sup> century, the Portuguese elites began to show interest in accumulating land. This is proved by the Jesuits, who obtained a significant amount of land, thereby leading to alienation of land (Souza 2009, 45). Teotónio R. de Souza has shown that the village communities wrote to the Portuguese authorities complaining against their exploitation by Jesuits and the Portuguese officials. A significant trend found in 17<sup>th</sup> century was alienation of the village temple land to the Jesuits and other outsiders who obtained the right to interfere in the village affairs. To avoid such a development, the government introduced a law in the 17<sup>th</sup> century stating that the individuals who obtained land grant from the state should not transfer the same to the Jesuits, as the latter emerged as the major land owners (Souza 2009, 46). It is noted that in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the main reason for ruralization was the lack of trade particularly due to the competition from the Dutch and the English who established their factories in the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries in different parts of the western coast (Disney 2010, 50).

Teotónio R. de Souza discussed the different individuals and institutions that enjoyed the right over the land in the pre Portuguese period. They were the village temples, gaoncars, and village artisans, who obtained high and low quality land. Apart from this, there was a practice of auctioning land and the gaoncars possessed the privilege to obtain this auction (Souza 2009, 47). However, in the Portuguese period, the temple lands were alienated to the Jesuits due to the conversion of people from Hinduism to Christianity. Secondly, the influential individuals called *Kuntkars* obtained the right to get the land cultivated. The new category of land owners in the 17<sup>th</sup> century also possessed the right to interfere in the affairs of the village communities (Souza 2009, 47; Kamat 2009, 363).

The Portuguese documents are useful to know the original land owners of the villages. Studies have been made by the scholars such as Panduranga Pissurlencar to study the temple owned lands (Pissurlencar 1952). The JRF provides the clue to locate the temples as the original land owners.

We present here (**Fig. 1**) the data regarding the land owned by temples, the brahmanas, and artisans.

Sl. No.	Reference to land of the temples/ brahmanas/artisans	Date	Reference
1	Palmar Batali Namossi	1603-1694	Matos 2006-2008, L 7, no. 77
2	Bairavonchi Namossi	1603-1694	Matos 2006-2008, L 7, no. 103
3	Betalachemvam, Dumpacho, Cunungo, Purvacharicho Curungo, Bramanachem Vanuá located in Tivim, Bardes	1703-05	Matos 2006-2008, L 11, no. 41
4	Naranachi Namasi, Baraxi Xita, Deuxata Raulnatache Diuxota, Deulachem Bata, Vorualichem Bata in Bardes	1730	Matos 2006-2008, L 15, no. 17
5	Talevaim Guierim, Paticardanachi Pangí, Borbata, Ravalnatachem, Bavimichimda and Dumpacho Cunvango of Assagao in Bardes	1737	Matos 2006-2008, L 19, no. 11
6	Cumbaranchi Nomossi of Parra village	1736	Matos 2006-2008, L 19, no. 16
7	Qeraune Xeta and Zoixea Patto of Anjuna in Bardes	1737	Matos 2006-2008, L 19, no. 28
8	Santerichem, Vassalachem and Zossachem batta in Anjuna of Bardes	1750	Matos 2006-2008, L 26, no. 139

1 Land of temples, brahmanas and artisans in JRF.

The above documents are only a few representative examples of land transfer from the artisans, temples and brahmanas to private individuals. On the one hand, it affected the institutions such as temples and on the other it affected the village communities, which had to contend with the new land owners who opposed the policies of the village communities. The documents belong to the period between 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries. In the 18<sup>th</sup> century, there was a continuation of the practice of land transfer from the traditional elites to the new elites who supported the state. However, in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century the Jesuit domination of the agrarian sector ended due to the policies of Pombal.

The documents mention different terms such as *namossy*, *cumbara* and *zoixea*. *Namossy* refers to the land grant to given to either temples or the artisans (Soares 1853, 211). *Zoixea* was the astrologer, mostly a brahmana. *Cumbara* was the potter. It shows that potters and astrologers provided service to the gaoncars and other members of the society as they obtained land grants for the same. According to Teotónio R. de Souza transfer of land from temples, brahmanas and artisans was generally not allowed in the traditional system of land management as the land grants needed the permission of the village communities (Souza 2009, 36). However, the Portuguese introduced modification to this system by encouraging transfer of land ownership from the traditional land owners to the new owners.

The government took interest in agricultural production to obtain a regular supply of food grains particularly in the pre Pombaline era (Fonseca 1878, 26). It has been suggested that in the early years of the Portuguese rule in Goa, the government focused more on trade rather than agricultural production and there was the use of the exalted epithet of 'Golden Goa' (Kamat 2000, 141). The concept of Golden Goa or Goa Dourada was used particularly in the age of decay to exhibit the greatness achieved by Goa under the Portuguese rule (Perez 2011, 31). However, Goa suffered from the lack of sufficient food supply, forcing it to import rice from Kanara apart from the cash crop such as pepper (Shastry 2000). Remy Dias argues that from the late 18<sup>th</sup> century, the Portuguese evinced keen interest in agricultural production as they realized that they had failed in the trade front (Dias 2004, 512). This development is also notable in the JRF.

In this context, it becomes important to analyse the measures taken by the government to encourage agricultural production in Goa particularly in the pre Pombaline period. An important measure was to grant land to private individuals who were encouraged to cultivate the crops. In many cases, people who obtained land on lease secured permission to develop the plot. In



Salcete we have the case of André de Albuquerque and Esperança Gomes who requested the continuation of the right to enjoy the plot of land and the authorities granted the request. The renter was instructed to pay rent regularly (Matos 2006-2008, L 7, 77, 1692). This was an early instance of the attempt made by the Portuguese to encourage agricultural production.

The families called *casados* (married men) obtained superior rights when compared to other landowners. For example, Dr. Manuel Pereira Peres obtained the permission to own several flood plains. The document also refers to the crown property and those belonging to the pagodas or temples of Verna, Arossim, Utorda, Majorda and Colva. There were different types of landed classes comprising the state, village communities, and private owners of the land (Matos 2006-2008, L 7, no. 195, 1693). By giving land to *casados*, an attempt was made to encourage agricultural production. *Casados*, generally, were involved in trade. Interestingly, this document shows that they were compelled to invest in land as it allowed them to achieve self-sufficiency when they stayed in their villages.

### **Christian women in the rural society**

The women also enjoyed the land ownership rights along with men. In this case, the prevailing law concerning men and women was applied. The Portuguese law benefited the women, particularly widows. At the same time, some widows, to repay the debt of their husbands, were compelled to sell the land. However, the family was given the option of electing a woman as the landowner. However, in most of the cases, the women were considered as the guardians of the assets of their sons as long as they were minors (Matos 2006-2008, L 10, no. 63, 1701). It is apparent that when the children reached the age of maturity, they obtained the land ownership right.

Women, as a part of the agrarian society benefited from the Portuguese policy of encouraging agricultural production. The Hindu females did not enjoy this privilege as the Portuguese favored, for obvious reasons, Christians. It was an attempt to encourage the Hindus to convert into Christianity. The information available in JRF concerning the problems of women become important as there are not many studies on the plight of women in colonial Goa. A few exceptions being the work of Fátima da Silva Gracias (1996) and Ernestine Carreira (2014). While Gracias has provided the empirical details of the problems faced by the women, Carreira attempted a historiographical analysis of the role of women in colonial Goa.



At the same time, it is revealed that there are significant number of works on the elite or upper class women while there are only a few studies on the underprivileged sections. The JRF provides vital information in this regard. We may also here refer to the statement made by Carreira, which summarizes the problems faced by women in the study period:

The reclusion of married women in all classes and castes was a fact of daily life. In 1559, the Portuguese governors outlawed sati (immolation by fire when the husband died), thus saving widows' lives, but without providing for them. Rejected by their families, they often had no choice but to convert to Christianity or turn to prostitution, even among the higher castes. (Carreira 2014, 558)

This statement of Carreira shows that widowhood was a status, which affected the Hindu women. At the same time, due to their alienation women had to convert into Christianity<sup>1</sup>. The study by Fátima Silva Gracias has shown that the property-related laws enacted for women were not properly enforced. Consequently, they had to approach the court to seek justice (Gracias 1996, 89). As the JRF shows, conversion to Christianity partly solved the problem of women as they had to seek permission of the authorities to look after their children. Secondly, financial problems or perhaps inability to manage the property forced them to sell their land, thereby leading to transfer of land ownership from the widows to the new land owning class.

For example, Domingos de Braga and João da Silva who were the guardians of the children of Luis de Braga obtained permission to sell the estate of a widow (Matos 2006-2008, L 7, no. 90, 1692). In Raçai of Salcete, D. Ana de Távora was allowed to retain the ownership right and she was considered as the second owner after her husband. She was allowed to nominate her successor. However, she had to fulfill the terms and conditions of the charter. She could not transfer the property without the permission of the government (Matos 2006-2008, L 10, no. 63, 1701). After the death of the husband, some women had to approach the court to assert their rights. For example, D. Francisca de Mendonça, a widow approached the court to prove that her husband had given the land on lease in the Sangolda village of Bardes (Matos 2006-2008, L 10, no. 99, 1701). Miranda (2014) argues that females in the Northern Province faced a similar challenge as colonial authorities and the local elites did not support the idea of women enjoying property rights (Miranda 2014, 176).

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<sup>1</sup> Also see Shastry (1988, 414).

## Village communities and rural indebtedness

As discussed by various scholars such as Souza (2009), Kamat (2009), and Dias (2004), the village communities faced considerable financial distress as they suffered from rural indebtedness, particularly due to the fact that agriculture was the main concern of the village communities. The state intervention in agricultural production and demand for enhanced taxes did not help the cause of agricultural production in the villages. Due to the investment of the elites in land, the village communities faced significant pressures. Such a development is also noted in the province of the North of Estado da India in the 17<sup>th</sup> century (Miranda 2014, 176). Teotónio R. de Souza argued that “[...] the village communities were becoming unable to meet the growing demands of the State, which was always short of funds and had developed the habit of milching them out of the village communities [...]” (Souza 2009, 47). Kamat (2009, 365) has shown that the village communities had to apply to the state authorities while purchasing and selling their land as mentioned in the Foral of 1526. In the pre-Portuguese period, such a permission was not required.

Shrikrishna Vanjari characterized the village community system as feudal based on the analysis of the relationship between *bhatcars* (land owners) and *mundkars* (tenants) (Vanjari 1968, 844). However, such an argument would be too simplistic as the village communities also suffered from colonial rule. Indeed, the argument of Vanjari that “The rural set up was feudal and oligarchic and since the Portuguese did not interfere much with the internal social structure of the villages [...]” (Vanjari 1969, 612) is also not acceptable. The JRF and studies by de Souza (2009) and Kamat (2009) have shown that the Portuguese interfered in the affairs of the village communities. Such a situation emerged mostly due to the decline in trade and the need for the state to depend on the revenue from agricultural taxation. According to Shastry (1988, 414-415), the village communities had to pay 2000 tankas to the Church. In addition, the latter also collected additional expenses such as repair of the Church from the village communities. Further, the latter were also forced to pay additional taxes to the State, which needed to maintain an army particularly to deal with the Maratha attacks. Those gaoncars who left the village lost their rights and privileges. These factors show that village communities can be considered as an institution that suffered from the state policies. Due to the demands by the State, the gaoncars were forced to pledge their land and seek funds to pay the taxes (Shastry 1988, 418). As we see in the JRF documents, indebtedness

was a major problem faced by the gaoncars. It has been suggested that in the European accounts, “[...] native Goans were mainly peripheral, appearing as palanquin bearers, galley slaves, petty traders, deceitful feudatory chiefs, and heathen savages requiring the ministries of the *Padroado*, the state sponsored church establishment” (Axelrod and Fuerch 1998, 443). Thereby the authors also note the absence of “human agency” in the case of the Portuguese accounts of the Goans. Consequently, the Goans were given a subaltern status by the colonial masters.

Axelrod (2008) shows that in the 18<sup>th</sup> century there was considerable state intervention in the New Conquest Region (NCR). According to Županov and Xavier (2014), the Portuguese always had the idea of colonising the land mostly to supply food grains to Portuguese controlled regions that lacked sufficient production of crops. In this way, they challenge the view that Portuguese Estado da India was a maritime state and suggest that the Portuguese State was concerned with land and territory (Županov and Xavier 2014, 515). These scholars are concerned with the exchange of agricultural products between India, Portugal, and its colonies. However, one also needs to offer explanations for an enhanced interest of Portuguese after the 17<sup>th</sup> century in agricultural production. As mentioned earlier, lack of trade was the major factor responsible for this development. We also need to note that the Portuguese failed to achieve self-sufficiency in agricultural production as they imported food grains from Kanara and the Northern Provinces. According to Rochelle Pinto, Foral of 1526 was a document used by the State to claim legitimacy for its actions from 16<sup>th</sup> century to 19<sup>th</sup> century (Pinto 2018, 190). At the same time, the study of Pinto shows the complex factors such as the need to enhance tax revenue and the response of the indigenous elites contributed to the changes in the policies of the Portuguese with respect to the village communities.

The village communities were in distress compelling them to pledge their land and obtain a loan so that they could repay the debt of the members of the community. The land was also pledged to carry out developmental work related to the village. The village communities shared the profit and loss among the members. For example, in Curtorim of Salcete, the gaoncars obtained the permission to pledge the village land for 12 000 xerafins. The Real Fazenda was not responsible for the repayment of this loan (Matos 2006-2008, L 7, no. 140, 1692). The pledge was due to the need to pay taxes to the state and the need for money to invest in agricultural production. At the same time, the government did not promise the lender regarding its role in the repayment of loan. The government was prepared to obtain profits

while refusing to suffer losses. The only support that the village communities obtained from the state was in the form of embargo or insurance to avoid their arrest and legal prosecution (Matos 2006-2008, L 7, no. 221, 1693).

The village communities faced the problem of losing their land due to the encroachment by private individuals. In 1731, a petition was filed by the members of the village community of Assagao in Bardes concerning the need for the demarcation and survey of the village land, which was usurped by some individuals. The gaoncars also claimed that the individuals did not pay the appropriate fees to the village community (Matos 2006-2008, L 15, no. 121, 1731). Private ownership of land posed a considerable threat to the future of the village communities. The state supported the individuals against the village communities. A strong gaoncari would have affected the State in the long term. Based on this evidence, it would be difficult to consider the village communities as feudal authorities.

The JRF provides information regarding money lending. The village communities borrowed funds for various reasons including agricultural production, carrying out the repair work and so on. However, when the village communities failed to repay the principal and interest amount it led to litigation as the creditors approached the court, particularly to recover a large amount of loans. Some creditors were Hindu money lenders, even though we also find reference to Catholic creditors. The following table (Fig. 2) provides information regarding the pattern of borrowing by the village communities.

Year	Borrower	Creditor	Amount	Reason	Repayment period
1691	Sircaim	NA <sup>2</sup>	300 Parduas	Buy fertile land	NA
1692	Malvara	NA	425 xerafins	NA	6 years
1692	Pilerne	NA	1000 xerafins	NA	NA
1692	Curtorim	NA	12 000 xerafins	NA	NA
1693	Nachinola	NA	600 xerafins	NA	NA
1693	Verbar of Bardez	NA	NA	NA	NA
1701	Tivim in Bardez	NA	4000 xerafins	To repay loans from António Gomes and Lucas de Melo	NA

<sup>2</sup> NA = Not Available.

Year	Borrower	Creditor	Amount	Reason	Repayment period
1701	Sirula of Bardez	NA	12 000 xerafins	NA	NA
1701	Revora of Bardez	Several creditors	2500 xerafins		NA
1701	General Chamber of Bardez	NA	21 000 xerafins	To repay the debt obtained from the convent of S. Francisco, Francisco de Pinho Teixeira and Pedro Coelho Leitão	NA
1701	Batim	Confraternities of the Lord Jesus and the Most Holy Sacramento	2000 xerafins	NA	NA
1701	Batim	NA	400 xerafins	Work related to path	NA
1701	Jose de Souza of island of Chorao	Matias Coelho de Loureiro	NA	NA	NA
1701	Vicente Soares de Castelo	Vencatu Dari	NA	Purchase diamond	NA
1701	João Afonso	Siva Chatim and Rama Chatim	NA	NA	NA
1702	Batim	NA	17 000 xerafins	Repay a debt	3 years
1702	Ela	NA	1280 xerafins	Repay a debt	8 years
1702	General Council of Island of Goa	NA	12 000	NA	6 years
1702	General Council of Bardez	NA	9000 xerafins	NA	NA
1702	Quelossi	NA	1500 xerafins	NA	NA
1730	Bastora	NA	1600 xerafins	To repay debt of 1000 xerafins and repair salt pan	3 months
1730	Bento Jacome Fonseca	Domingo de Souza	715 xerafins	NA	NA

Year	Borrower	Creditor	Amount	Reason	Repayment period
1730	Janqui (Janaki) Xitini, Babum Chatim and his wife Idecamini Xitini, and Ganecam Chatim and Ipu Chatim	Jose Mascarenhas	225 xerafins	NA	NA
1730	João Xavier dos Remédios	Manuel Fralais Serrão	422 xerafins	Trade	NA
1731	Chamber of the Province of Bardez	NA	6500 xerafins	Donate for the marriage of the prince of Portugal	6 years
1731	Carim in Chorao Island	Confraternity of the chapel of Nossa Senhora da Saúde	3500 xerafins	NA	NA
1731	João de Bragança	Father João Baptista de Bragança	800 xerafins	NA	NA
1747	Babulia Xeti and Narana Xeti	Rogu Naique	NA	NA	NA
1747	Pedro do Rego	Narana Sinai Dumo	4500 xerafins	NA	NA
1748	António Caetano Ribeiro	Rama Poi	1200 xerafins	NA	NA
1748	Pedro do Rego	Arcângela de Espírito Santo	5000 xerafins	NA	NA
1749	Pandu Sinai	José Soares de Matos	700 xerafins	NA	NA
1749	Priest Pedro Lopes	Domingos Furtado Rodrigues	200 xerafins	NA	NA
1749	Manuel Lobo	João da Silveira	800 xerafins	NA	NA
1750	Manual da Lima	Village community of Carim	1000 xerafins	NA	NA

2 Money Lending Pattern. Source: Matos 2006-2008.

The above table shows that apart from village communities, a few individuals, and the state borrowed loans. The village communities mostly borrowed money for agrarian-related activities. However, there are some cases of the village communities obtaining loan to pay for the marriage of the prince of Portugal. It was done to appease the state. Interesting details regarding the creditors are available. In a few instances, Catholics advanced loans. They also included religious institutions. However, by 1750, we find involvement of Hindus as creditors and borrowers. It also provided the opportunity for people to earn money through trade after 1750.

### **Pombaline era**

Marquis the Pombal, who administered Portugal from 1750s to 1777, introduced various measures with the aim to have a long-term impact on the Goan polity and economy. His aim was to restore the past glory of Goa to justify the epithet “Golden Goa” or Goa Dourada (Perez 2011, 31). This was one of the final opportunities available to the Portuguese government to redeem itself and start the process of rebuilding Goan and Portuguese economy. An important step initiated by Pombal was to expel the Jesuits and declare their assets as the government property (Fonseca 1878, 183). Secondly, he took measures to encourage agricultural production, as Goa did not achieve self-sufficiency in food production and depended on the rice supplies from the Kanara coast. Third, he encouraged Goa’s participation in international trade. Compared to the pre-Pombaline era, one finds a few changes taking place in the society. However, Goa could not achieve its past glory of the golden age of commerce that it witnessed in the 16<sup>th</sup> century. The JRF contains discussion regarding trade in tobacco, pepper, and textiles.

Kenneth Maxwell argues that the reforms introduced by Pombal led to the destruction of the “enemies of Hindus” – that is Jesuits and the Inquisition. It led to larger participation of Hindus in the economic life of Goa. The Gauda Saraswata Brahmanas, particularly benefited from this development (Maxwell 1995, 139). It allowed the Indian and other Asian merchants to dominate the Portuguese trade in this zone. At the same time, the expansion of the Portuguese to what is termed “New Conquest Region” (NCR) in addition to the “Old Conquest Region” (OCR) considerably benefited Estado da India. It also led an alliance between the Portuguese and the Saraswats (Maxwell 1995, 139). Pius Malekandathil noted that by the 1750s there was the emergence of the Saraswat traders



such as the Mhamais and others who maintained a trade relationship with Brazil, Mozambique, Macao, and they also participated in tobacco trade (Malekandathil 2014, 141). He also suggests that the Saraswats, due to the Portuguese support, emerged as the merchant capitalists (Malekandathil 2014, 148). It is evident that the Pombaline reforms by providing greater freedom to the Saraswats achieved the desired results.

Paul Axelrod discusses the nature of the 18<sup>th</sup> century policy of the Portuguese. He does not find substantial difference between old conquest and new conquest due to absence of the new gentry particularly in the NCR. It shows that in the Maratha-controlled regions the state allowed emergence of the local elites, while in the Portuguese-controlled regions, emergence of the new gentry was avoided (Axelrod 2008, 555). The study shows the state intervention in these regions. However, it would not be correct to compare a colonial with a pre-colonial or non-colonial state, as the Portuguese and the Marathas had their own compulsions either to allow or discourage gentrification. Further, one needs to note that the NCR witnessed a few armed resistance movements against the Portuguese in the 19<sup>th</sup> century (Kamat 1999). Consequently, it would be difficult to accept that there was a lack of gentrification in the NCR. As argued by Remy Dias, the village communities were continued to be exploited by the colonial government as the village communities were compelled to finance the state by borrowing from the money lenders (Dias 2004, 108). At the same time, Dias has shown that the majority portion of the cultivated land (around 79%) was in the hands of the private owners while the government owned a majority of non-cultivable and forest land (Dias 2004, 159). Dias has also shown that feudal lords such as the Desais continued to exist and prosper under the Portuguese in the NCR (Dias 2004, 187). It shows an alliance between the government and private land owners who financed the government when compared with the village communities. Indeed, the village communities lost their relevance in the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

In the Pombaline era, we find changes in the approach of the government towards the Hindus. In the pre Pombaline era, the Catholic women were given the property rights. However, in the Pombaline era, Hindu women were also provided this privilege. For example, the JRF record belonging to 1777 mentions that a widow of Antoba Sinai was allowed to sell the garden of her husband situated in Diu (Matos 2006-2008, L 48, no. 162). At the same time, the Catholic women continued to inherit the property of their husbands on the condition that they needed to pay the taxes to the state and refrain from transfer of the land to any other individual or a religious institution (Matos 2006-2008, L 57, no. 10, 1790).

As discussed by Panduranga Pissurlencar, Celsa Pinto, Remi Dias and Ernstine Carreira, there was the emergence of Hindu traders as the dominant trading community who benefited from the support given to them by the Portuguese state, which aimed to find the alternative means of enhancing its income to manage a larger territory after the conquest of NCR. The JRF has several documents to prove this argument.

This work provides some interesting details regarding trade. These details are useful to reconstruct and corroborate the research already undertaken on Goa by various scholars. The Gauda Saraswat Brahmans, as discussed by Pissurlencar, remained important for the Portuguese Empire as it depended on trade (Pissurlencar 1933, 1-47). The Saraswats assisted the Portuguese in obtaining essential and commercial commodities, which the Portuguese could export to Europe. To obtain the support of the Hindu traders, the Portuguese granted some privileges to them. This understanding between the two expanded in the eighteenth century when the Portuguese included the NCR in its territory<sup>3</sup>. Pepper remained as an important item of trade even though its demand in the international market declined when compared to the trade in textiles (Malony 1986, 351-361; Prakash 2004, 314). We also find timber trade, as the Saraswats in the NCR procured goods for the Portuguese (Matos 2006-2008, L 84, no. 6, 1749). The demand for enhanced timber also shows increased demand for shipping in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. One also finds the emergence of the enhanced trade relationship between Goa and the Sunda of Karnataka, which possessed a huge quantity of high-quality pepper. However, one also finds the emergence of tobacco trade during this period<sup>4</sup>. As seen in the earlier section, some traders also acted as moneylenders. Amar Farooqui has shown that the Portuguese, like the British, benefited from the opium trade due to the exchange of commodities between Gujarat and Mozambique. However, his study was in the context of Daman (Farooqui 2016, 58).

In the pre Pombaline era also we find the role of the Hindu traders. However, they provided service to the rural population. In 1692, Ganes Gananochat, Massaneochati and Narnochati were given some trade concessions. They were the traders in clothes, fabric and lace. They were exempted from the payment of tax. However, they were asked to pay ten xerafins per year to the Junta da Real Fazenda. They were permitted to

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<sup>3</sup> New Conquest Goa comprised the regions such as Ponda, Bicholim, Zambaulim, Canacona, Pernem, Sanguem, Quepem and Satari (D'Souza 1975, 96).

<sup>4</sup> Regarding tobacco trade in Goa see Pinto 1994, 195.

open a shop with two servants. They are also mentioned as the gaoncars and merchants (Matos 2006-2008, L 7, no. 114, 1692). It is possible that gaoncars indulged in trade to supply the provisions to their village and enhance their income. Their influential position also assisted them in obtaining trade concessions from the government. It shows the gradual shift of the gaoncars from agricultural production to trade.

In the Pombaline era, the state enhanced its support to the Hindu traders. In 1750, the businessman Upea Comoti, who had provided provisions to the Portuguese during their war against the Marathas, was given the right to walk through the streets of Panjim and use palanquin along with his family members. Although he was expected to pay for the rights of goods obtained through the pass, he was exempted from the tax named bazarucos. These rights and privileges were also extended to the family members and their descendants (Matos 2006-2008, L 26, no. 133, 1750). Another record, belonging to 1750, mentions that Gopala Camotim and his predecessors had rendered considerable service to the Portuguese during the times of war. After considering this service, the government decided to grant him the privilege. As per this privilege, he was not required to take oath in the name of his family members when there were cases against him. Consequently, the trader was given immunity that protected him from legal action (Matos 2006-2008, L 26, no. 143, 1750). In 1757, Rama Custam Naik was given the rights, privileges, and exemptions for the conduct of his business in Estado da India (Matos 2006-2008, L 9, no. 28, 1757). Through this measure, the government attempted to obtain the support of the trading community. In 1790, Suba Naik and Babi Rama Porobo, the merchants who lived in Combarjua petitioned the government to exempt them from the payment of brokerage in the city of Goa based on the argument that they were the Portuguese citizens. The government accepted the request (Matos 2006-2008, L 56, no. 108, 1790). As argued by Celsa Pinto, Combarjua in the NCR emerged as an important trading settlement as many Goans traders belonged to this region (Pinto 2014, 266).

### **Pepper Trade**

In the Pombaline era, there was the conquest of the regions under the control of the Sunda kingdom and the Marathas. These regions were not conquered by Hyder Ali of Mysore who threatened to conquer Goa (Carreira 2014, 75). These regions became part of the NCR. These conquests

enabled the state to obtain agrarian revenue from the Goan territories of the erstwhile Sunda kingdom. However, for pepper supplies, it had to mostly depend on the Karnataka territories that were previously under the control of Sunda kingdom but now occupied by Mysore (Carreira 2014, 75).

Even though in the eighteenth century pepper trade had declined, the Portuguese continued to trade in this commodity. Compared to the pepper trade of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the pepper trade of the eighteenth century was not substantial. The Portuguese also faced the problem of mounting debt to the merchants. There was a hope of clearing debt by selling the Sunda pepper. The document also mentions the export of brandy and beads to Mozambique. At the same time, it was decided to import gold and silver to Goa to repay the debt. The document mentions Vitogi Sinai Dumo as the merchant who bought the pepper for the Portuguese who depended on the Hindu merchants for the procurement of pepper (Matos 2006-2008, L 85, no. 1, 1752). As Carrerira argues, the trade relationship of Goa with the international trade centers such as Mozambique enable us to situate Goa in the global context (Carreira 2014, 303). Carreira also notes the import of the Brazilian currency Patacas from Bahia to Goa (Carreira 2014, 341). It shows that in the 18<sup>th</sup> century Goa under the Portuguese had an opportunity to revive its economic glory.

The document belonging to 1753 CE shows the demand for the Sunda pepper in Portugal. Previously it was decided to buy all the Sunda pepper<sup>5</sup>. The Portuguese official bought more than 40 khandis of pepper at the rate of 10, 895 xerafins. However, due to the war that had emerged with the Sundas, the traders could not buy more pepper<sup>6</sup> (Matos 2006-2008, L 85, no. 2, 1753). In 1754, 6875 xerafins worth of Sunda pepper was bought (Matos 2006-2008, L 85, no. 3, 1754). The Portuguese faced a severe financial crisis in buying pepper needed to pay off the debt to the merchants. To deal with the financial crisis, it was suggested that there was a need for a fund of 100 000 xerafins so that the same could be used to buy the commodities (Matos 2006-2008, L 85, no. 7, 1756). According to the document belonging to 1757, the pepper bought in the previous years was damaged in an earthquake. More than 29 000 xerafins were sent to Goa to buy pepper. The official regretted that he could not spend more on the purchase of pepper (Matos 2006-2008, L 85, no. 9, 1757).

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<sup>5</sup> It has been suggested that Sunda pepper was of the best quality available in western India (Hamilton 1744, 263).

<sup>6</sup> Khandi was a measure used in the pepper trade. Accordingly, one khandi was equal to approximately 220 kg (Shastry 2000, 271).

There is also reference to the European rivalry in Malabar and Kanara to buy pepper (Nierstrasz 2015, 141; Mailaparambil 2012, 171). The English were active in Malabar where they bought pepper, while the Portuguese could not buy pepper from Malabar. Captain João de Saldanha Lobo went to Malabar to buy pepper with 50 000 xerafins. However, due to the French competition and lack of business knowledge he could not buy pepper. Consequently, the Portuguese could ship only the Sunda pepper. However, they faced the competition from the English who offered a higher price. It was found that pepper and saltpetre were the only commodities that fetched the profit. It was also decided to purchase pepper from the ports such as Mangalore, Cochin, and Tellicherry on the Kanara and Malabar Coasts (Matos 2006-2008, L 85, no. 15, 1758). A document belonging to 1758 is important as it gives information regarding the rise of pepper prices. There was a rumour that the demand for pepper in Lisbon increased considerably. The Portuguese had to send the war frigates to Tellicherry and Mahim to buy pepper (Matos 2006-2008, L 85, no. 12, 1758)<sup>7</sup>.

In 1759, there was the purchase of 1223 quintals of Sunda pepper. Poquea Sinai Dumo is mentioned as the merchant who procured pepper for the Portuguese. However, the war with the Marathas affected the pepper trade (Matos 2006-2008, L 85, no. 16, 1759). In 1760, 218 quintals of pepper were bought in Sunda. However, an increase in the price of the pepper due to the competition from the British who offered a higher price affected the Portuguese pepper trade. It was found that there was a need to sell pepper immediately after reaching the port (Matos 2006-2008, L 85, no. 17, 1760)<sup>8</sup>. In 1761, the pepper merchant Poquea Sinai Dumo demanded two percent of the amount paid to the Portuguese and private brokers (Matos 2006-2008, L 85, no. 84, 1761). In 1762, more than 21 000 xerafins were spent for the purchase of pepper. At the same time, textile emerged as the most important item of trade. The document refers to the purchase of more than 60 bales of cloth bought from different ports at the price of more than 100 000 xerafins. The document also mentions the lack of pepper due to the competition from English. There is also a reference to the trade in saltpetre (Matos 2006-2008, L 85, no. 28, 1762). A document belonging to 1765 mentions the purchase of pepper, saltpetre and clothes. Saltpetre was bought from Bengal. The Portuguese did not obtain pepper from Sunda

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<sup>7</sup> One also needs to use the Mhamai records available in the Xavier Centre for Historical Research, Goa (Souza 1980, 435-445).

<sup>8</sup> Regarding the competition between the Portuguese and English for pepper supply in Kanara, see Danvers 1892, 35.

due to the war with Hyder Ali of Mysore. Consequently, the Portuguese had to send a ship to Malabar to procure pepper. At the same time, due to the enhanced demand by English, there was an increase in the price of saltpetre. More than 80 000 xerafins were allotted for the purchase of pepper, saltpetre, and clothes (Matos 2006-2008, L 85, no. 38, 1765). In this context, the study of Carreira, already mentioned in this work, obtains significance, as it shows the trade between the Portuguese and French in Mahé. The above documents show that the Portuguese attempted to revive trade in the eighteenth century. However, by this period, pepper trade had declined. At the same time, there was an increase in the pepper price. The phenomenal profit that the Portuguese obtained from pepper trade in the 16<sup>th</sup> century was a mirage in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. The emergence of the private traders was an important feature of this period, which distinguished it from the 16<sup>th</sup> century. In this sense, the trade of the 18<sup>th</sup> century was different from the trade of the 16<sup>th</sup> century.

### **Role of Mhamais of Goa**

The above documents show the importance of the Saraswats in the pepper trade. Sunda and Tellicherry were the important regions from where the Portuguese obtained pepper. Mhamai Kamats emerged as the important traders. The role of Mhamai Kamats in inter-regional and international trade has been studied by Teotónio R. de Souza and Ernestine Carreira. The Mhamai Kamat papers have been preserved in the Xavier Centre for Historical Research, Goa, which has thousands of documents written in Kannada Modi script in Konkani or Marathi. Today in Goa there are only a few who can read this script. However, there are some English and French documents, which provide information regarding the trade relationship that the Mhamais maintained with them. Teotónio R. de Souza and Ernestine Carreira used the European sources to discuss the role of the Mhamais in colonial Goa. Souza mentions the traders such as Suba Camotim, Upea and Pandu Camotim, the members of the same family, who were sometimes involved in litigation (Souza 1980, 439). It has been suggested that the Mhamais were compelled to invest in trade due to the policy of the Portuguese not to allow the Hindus own property in the 16<sup>th</sup> century. Consequently, there was a transition of the Mhamai from the land lords to the traders (Souza 1980, 436). However, the opportunity available in the Pombaline era enhanced the position of the Mhamais as the premier



traders of Goa. The JRF mentions Upea Camotim who was rewarded for his service to the Portuguese (Matos 2006-2008, L 26, no. 133, 1750). They also acted as revenue farmers, suppliers of the provisions and other materials to the state shipyard, brokers and insurers particularly to the French, and dealers in slaves and opium trade (Souza 1980, 440). However, the Mhamais, who traded in opium, were found guilty of avoiding payment of around 180 000 xerafins to the state and consequently the house declined in early 19<sup>th</sup> century (Souza 1980, 440). Carreira, on the other hand, argues that the decline of the Mhamais was due to the decline of the French in western India, as the Mhamais maintained a close diplomatic and commercial relationship with the French in Mahe (Carreira 2014, 213). According to Celsa Pinto, the Mhamais were trading in 1818 even after the decline of the French in India. It shows that the Mhamais did not flee the arena of trade and continued to trade in the post Pombaline period as well (Pinto 1994, 55). However, one needs to credit Pombal for liberalizing society and economy by encouraging the Hindus to contribute to the economic life by trading in various commodities not only in Goa but also other regions in Asia and Africa controlled by the Portuguese. It led to the formation of the Brahmana elites who played an important role in the post Pombaline era. A study by Philomena Sequeira Antony shows that in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the Portuguese shifted their attention from Goa to Bahia in Brazil. According to her, the conflict between Europeans including the Portuguese and the Dutch contributed to the decline in the position of Goa when compared with Brazil (Antony 2013, 107). She has also shown that the Portuguese encouraged the Brazilian agricultural production by allowing Goa-Bahia trade in tobacco. It emerged as a commercial product, which entered India through Goa (Antony 2013, 291). The Mhamais, who are also represented in JRF, benefited from the local, regional, and global developments in trade. They obtained support from the authorities at home, traded with the French located in Mahé, and the Mhamais could cater to the needs of other colonies of Portuguese at the global context.

### **Post Pombaline era**

What was the impact of Pombaline reforms in the 19<sup>th</sup> century on Goa? The 19<sup>th</sup> century represents another phase of the history of Goa. There was continuity and change. For example, we find further attempts made by the Portuguese to expand its trade as discussed by Carreira. Celsa Pinto, on the



other hand, argues that there was a considerable progress in the trade front particularly due to the participation of Goa in regional and inter regional trade. The decline in international trade was replaced by what is termed “country trade” (Pinto 1994, 10). Celsa Pinto argues that “A sound Portuguese trading system was in existence even in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries” even though she is aware that the Portuguese government did not benefit much from this trade (Pinto 1994, 29). However, it does not mean that Goa had reached its glory that it achieved in the 16<sup>th</sup> century. Indeed, it has been suggested that “The economy of colonial Goa had deteriorated considerably in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries” (Bhat 2008, 625). It was difficult to regain Goa Dourada or justify this title for Goa. Pius Malekandathil notes that there was economic enterprise. However, he notes the prevalence of ruralization in the 19<sup>th</sup> century Goa (Malekandathil 2012). Remy Dias argues that there were changes in the agricultural sector (Dias 2004, 140). The attempt of the Portuguese to revive agricultural production did not yield the desired results. This was also due to the rise of Bombay as an alternative settlement for the Goans and in the 19<sup>th</sup> century there was the migration of large number of Goans to Bombay and it led to the emergence of the revenue from the emigrants. Goan economy, by the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, completely depended on remittance from the Goans who migrated to Bombay (Dias 2004, 396). The decline of the French and the rise of the British was a major development in this period. Goa under the Portuguese, in the post Pombaline era, depended on the British controlled territories. For example, it is shown that Goa obtained the rice supplies from the Kanara ports such as Mangalore and Basrur (Dias 2004, 343). According to Rochelle Pinto, Goans had to live between two empires, the British and the Portuguese (Pinto 2007). All these developments of the post Pombaline era are not recorded by the available records of JRF. However, the details mentioned in the JRF concerning the pre Pombaline and Pombaline eras show the major changes taking place in the Goan society. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century there was the emergence of social groups such as the Chardos who provided leadership to the Goan freedom struggle in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

## **Conclusion**

The paper has discussed the three phases of the long eighteenth century, which had a notable impact on the Goan society and economy. In the pre Pombaline era, there was considerable decline in trade and there was an

increase in the pressure on land. The colonial state affected the position of the village communities, which had to seek financial support to sustain themselves due to the enhanced demand for taxes and other exaction from the state. It has been shown that the village communities cannot be considered as the feudal agencies, as the village communities were the part of the colonial system. There was considerable state intervention in the activities of the village communities. At the same time, the Jesuits and other private individuals obtained a considerable support from the government. In the second phase, we find further expansion in agricultural production along with trade. This was due to the process named the New Conquest, which led to the conquest of the new territories into the territory of Goa under the Estado da India. Now we find the end of the Jesuit domination of the Goan society and the rise of the Hindu traders, who became the collaborators of the colonial state as the latter needed to revitalize its trade particularly due to the competition from the English, Dutch and the French. During this phase, the village communities continued to face the pressure from the state. In the post Pombaline era, agricultural production further suffered and in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century with the rise of Bombay, the Goan agrarian revenue was replaced by remittance from Bombay as the major source of revenue for the state and Goan population. The documents found in JRF are useful to study the long eighteenth century.

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