

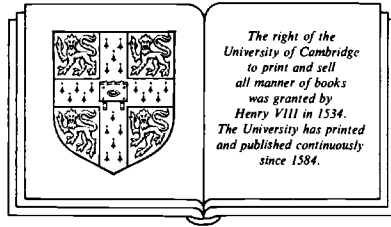
**A History of  
Christianity in India**



# A History of Christianity in India

The Beginnings to AD 1707

STEPHEN NEILL F.B.A.



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## Preface

This work is the first instalment in the accomplishment of a project entered into more than half a century ago.

In 1930, as a young missionary in South India, I became aware that no coherent and comprehensive account of Christianity in India was available. Protestant writers had dealt cursorily, if at all, with Roman Catholic missions; Roman Catholic writers hardly mentioned Protestant endeavour. Both agreed in regarding the ancient church of the Thomas Christians as a subject for special and separate treatment. Professor K.S. Latourette's great *History of the Expansion of Christianity* still lay in the future. As that work appeared, with ample bibliographical material in each volume, it inaugurated a new epoch in missionary studies. Yet even Latourette did not feel it in accordance with his purpose to devote space to detailed study of the Thomas Christians.

Hoping that one day I might be able to make some contribution towards filling the gap, I set myself with ardour to the study of the subject. During the next forty years and more, a number of chapters had been written and abandoned in the light of fuller knowledge. Only after retirement from full work in other areas have I been able to make Christianity in India a matter of central concern.

The Christian church has existed in India for at least 1,500 years. It antedates the coming of the first Muslims by two centuries, and the formation of the Sikh religion by a thousand years. It has lived and maintained itself in constant action and reaction with the non-Christian world by which it is surrounded. It is now firmly rooted in Indian soil. Christians form the third largest religious community in India. This being so, it has been my aim, not to write mission history – in my opinion a very dull subject – but to survey the whole history of the Indian sub-continent in relation to the presence and growth in India of a fellowship which, foreign in its origins, has increasingly established itself as a part of Indian life. For this reason I have devoted considerable space – too much, perhaps, in the opinion of some readers – to the social, political and religious experience of the Indian peoples, and to the non-Christian reactions to the Christian presence.

## Preface

The literature on India, and even on Christian India, is gigantic. With the exception of chapter 4, for which the materials are exiguous, each chapter of this work could easily have been expanded into a book. From the coming of the Portuguese in 1498 the mass of printed materials is daunting in its range and volume. Selection and compression have throughout presented major difficulties. My aim in each section has been to make clear the main lines of development, and to add as much illustrative detail as considerations of space have permitted. Footnotes have been kept within such limits as are consistent with academic precision, and more technical matters have been consigned to appendices.

The bibliography makes no claim to completeness. But almost all the works included are themselves provided with extensive and valuable bibliographies. It is hoped that with their aid the student may be able to find his way to the more detailed studies of which he may stand in need.

This volume brings the story up to AD 1707, the year of the death of Aurungzib, the last of the really great Mughul emperors, and the year after the arrival of the first Protestant missionaries in South India.

It remains to express my gratitude to the many who have helped me in various ways. I have made extensive use of the libraries of the Indian Institute, Oxford; of the Day Missions Library at Yale Divinity School, New Haven, Conn.; of the Library of the Theological Faculty of the University of Hamburg; of the Cambridge University Library; the London Library; the Missionary Research Library at Union Theological Seminary, New York; the libraries of the Church Missionary Society, the United Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, and the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, all in London; and of the United Theological College, Bangalore, South India. To the courteous and helpful members of the staffs of all these various institutions my thanks are due.

Dr Percival Spear, Bishop L.W. Brown, Professor Van den Berg, Sir John Lawrence Bart., and other less expert friends have greatly helped me by reading and commenting on a number of chapters. Earlier drafts were typed by the veteran Miss G.I. Mather, who had typed a number of my earlier books. The later work has been carried out by Mrs John McCandlish, who has shown wonderful patience in the typing and retyping of drafts, and in bringing the text into conformity with the requirements of the publisher. It gives me great pleasure to add here the name of the Cambridge University Press, which published a work of mine in 1930; members of the staff of the Press have rendered inestimable service.

My missionary parents Dr Charles Neill (*d.* 1940) and Dr Margaret Penelope Neill (*d.* 1951) carried me off to India in 1901. Since that time India has been at the very heart of my concerns and affections.

S. C. N.

# The Spelling of Indian Names

Indian names are spelt in such a vast variety of ways in both English and other European languages that it is almost impossible to be perfectly consistent.

If an Indian name, such as Oudh or Benares, has become to all intents and purposes part of the English language, little seems to be gained by writing Avadh or Varanasi. But in most cases both forms of the name, with cross-references, will be found in the index. In the case of less familiar names, the Indian form is generally followed, though here also both forms will be found in the index. In doubtful cases I have generally followed the spelling given in the *Times Atlas*. Christian names have almost invariably been given in the English form – *Francis Xavier* has become almost an English name.

Diacritical marks have been in many cases added, where they are needed to indicate to the reader what the pronunciation should be. Where pronunciation is hardly affected, they have in a number of cases been omitted.

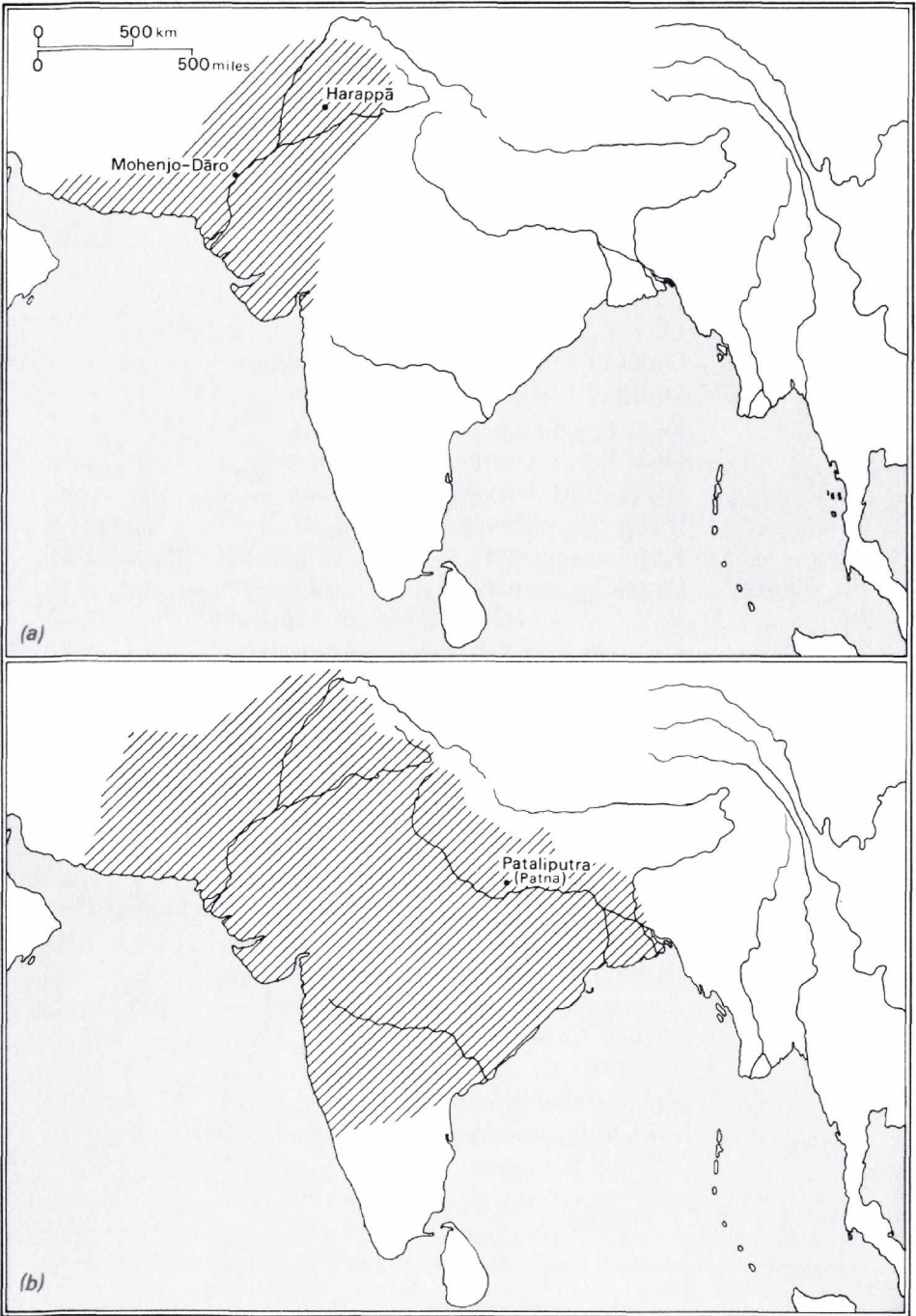
In quotations from sources, the form used by the original writer has generally been maintained. But this does not always apply to works written in languages other than English, where the forms show considerable variety. Where the name of a translation or of a printed English version is not given, the translation has in most cases been made by myself.

## Abbreviations

<i>AA</i>	<i>Ā'in-i-Akbarī</i>
<i>Anal. Aug.</i>	<i>Analecta Augustiniana</i>
<i>AHSI</i>	<i>Archivum Historicum Societatis Jesu</i>
<i>ARSI</i>	<i>Archivum Romanum Societatis Jesu</i>
<i>ASB</i>	See <i>MASB</i>
<i>Bibl. Miss.</i>	<i>Bibliotheca Missionum</i>
<i>BSOAS</i>	<i>Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies</i>
<i>BSOS</i>	<i>Bulletin of the School of Oriental Studies</i>
<i>Bull. App.</i>	<i>Bullarium Patronatus Portugalliae Regum: Appendix</i>
<i>CAH</i>	<i>Cambridge Ancient History</i>
<i>CHI</i>	<i>Cambridge History of India</i>
<i>CMedH</i>	<i>Cambridge Medieval History</i>
<i>CMS</i>	<i>Church Missionary Society</i>
<i>CR</i>	<i>Clerks Regular of the Divine Providence (Theatines)</i>
<i>DCB</i>	<i>Dictionary of Christian Biography</i>
<i>DI</i>	<i>Documenta Indica</i>
<i>DNB</i>	<i>Dictionary of National Biography</i>
<i>Encycl. Brit.</i>	<i>Encyclopaedia Britannica</i>
<i>Epigr. Ind.</i>	<i>Epigraphia Indica</i>
<i>ERE</i>	<i>Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics</i>
<i>EX</i>	<i>Epistolae Xaverianae</i>
<i>Gr. Chr. Schr.</i>	<i>Griechische Christliche Schriftsteller</i>
<i>ICHR</i>	<i>Indian Church History Review</i>
<i>i.p.i.</i>	<i>in partibus infidelium</i>
<i>IRM</i>	<i>International Review of Missions [of Mission]</i>
<i>ISPCK</i>	<i>Indian Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge</i>
<i>JASB</i>	<i>Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal</i>
<i>JESHO</i>	<i>Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient</i>
<i>JIH</i>	<i>Journal of Indian History</i>
<i>JPASB</i>	<i>Journal of the Proceedings of the Asiatic Society of Bengal</i>
<i>JPASB NS</i>	<i>JPASB New Series</i>
<i>JPHS</i>	<i>Journal of the Panjab Historical Society</i>

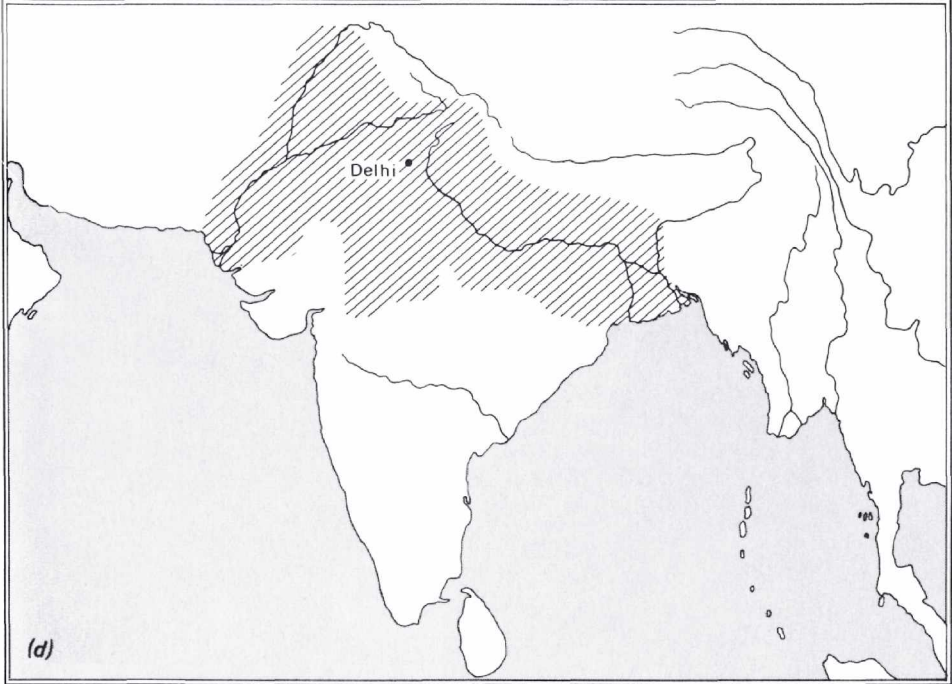
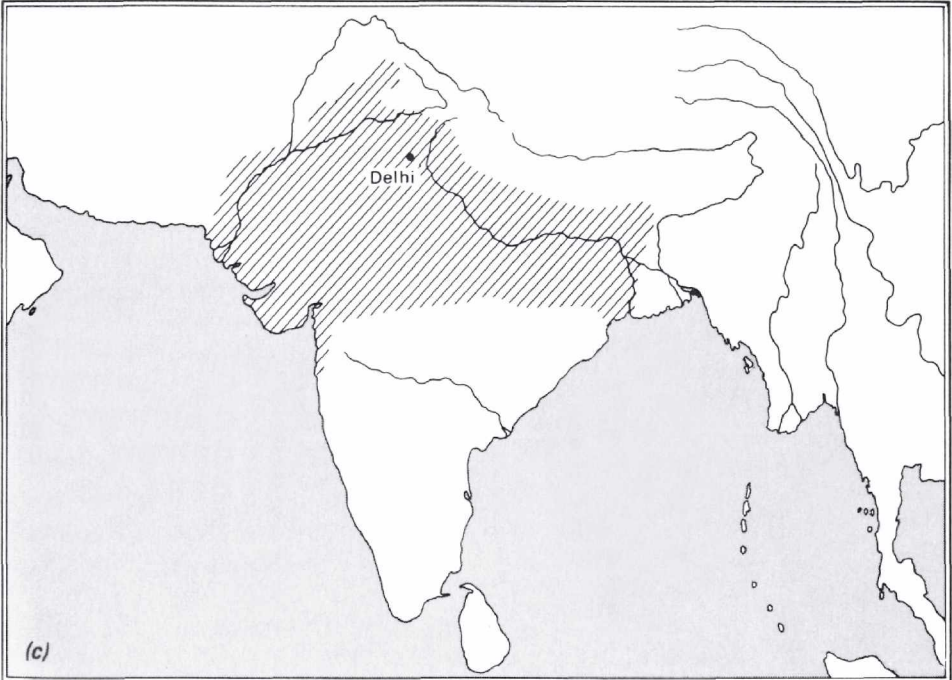
*Abbreviations*

<i>JRAS</i>	<i>Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland</i>
LMS	London Missionary Society
MASB (ASB)	Memoirs of the Asiatic Society of Bengal
<i>Mon. Xav.</i>	<i>Monumenta Xaveriana</i>
<i>New CMH</i>	<i>New Cambridge Modern History</i>
<i>NZM</i>	<i>Neue Zeitschrift für Missionswissenschaft</i>
OCC	Order of Calced Carmelites
ODC	Order of Discalced Carmelites
<i>ODCC</i>	<i>Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church</i>
<i>OED</i>	<i>Oxford English Dictionary</i>
OFM	Order of Friars Minor (Franciscans)
OFM. Cap.	Order of Friars Minor (Capuchins)
OMI	Oblates of Mary Immaculate
OP	Ordo Praedicatorum. Order of Preachers (Dominicans)
OSA	Order of St Augustine
OSB	Order of St Benedict
PG	Patrologia Graeca
PL	Patrologia Latina
<i>RE</i>	<i>Real-Encyclopädie für Theologie und Kirche</i>
<i>RGG</i>	<i>Die Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart</i>
<i>RHM</i>	<i>Revue de l'Histoire des Missions</i>
<i>RV.</i>	<i>Rg Veda</i>
SBE	Sacred Books of the East
SCPF	Sacred Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith (Propaganda)
SJ	Society of Jesus
SOAS	School of Oriental and African Studies
SPG	Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts
SR	da Silva Rêgo
SR, <i>Doc.</i>	da Silva Rêgo, <i>Documentação</i>
SVD	Society of the Divine Word (Societas Divini Verbi)
<i>Vig. Chr.</i>	<i>Vigiliae Christianae</i>
<i>ZMR</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für Missionswissenschaft und Religionswissenschaft</i>
<i>ZNW</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft</i>

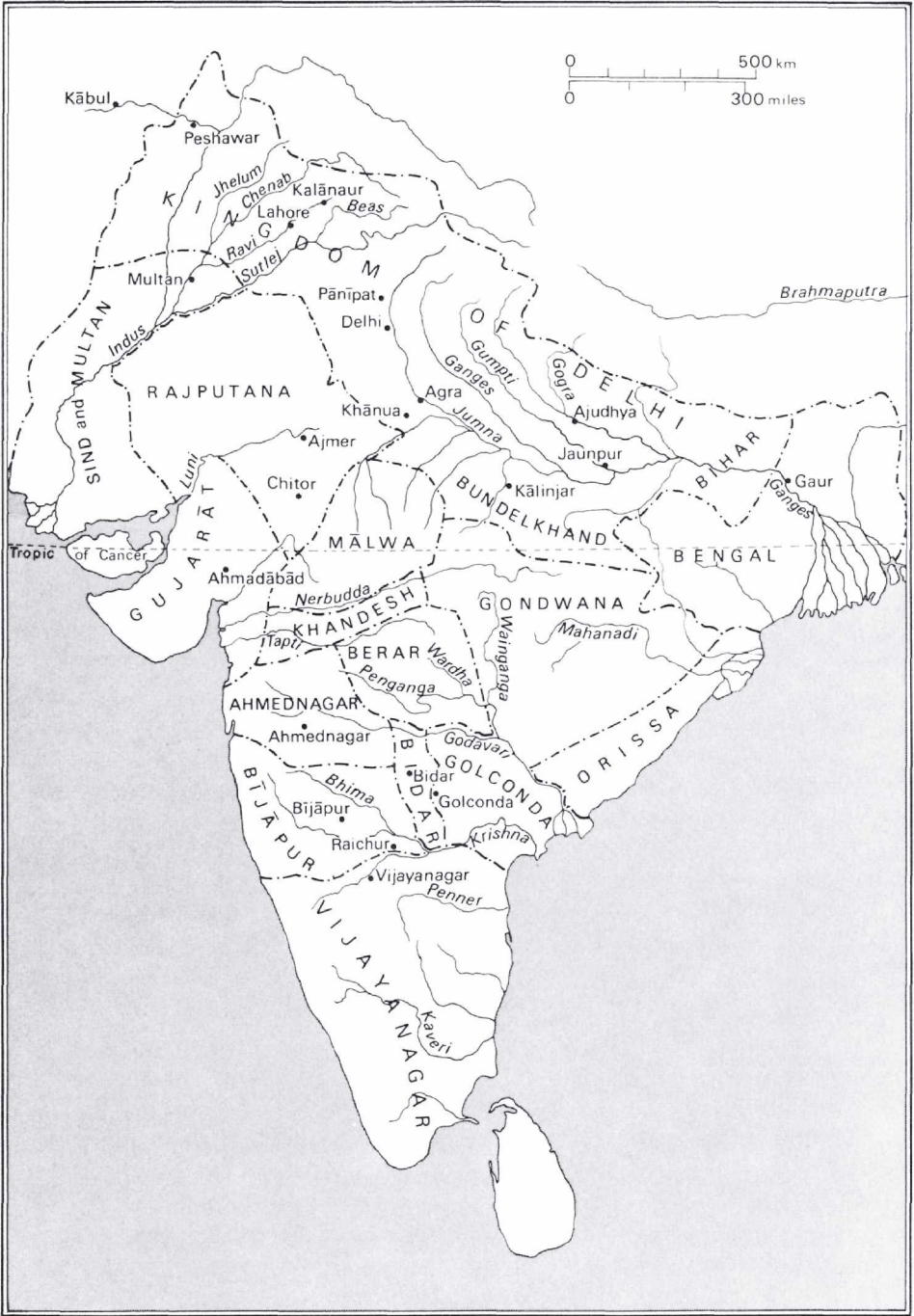


**Map 1 Pre-European Indian Empires**  
(a) Indus Valley Empire  
(b) Mauryan Empire in the Reign of Aśoka (272–232 BC)





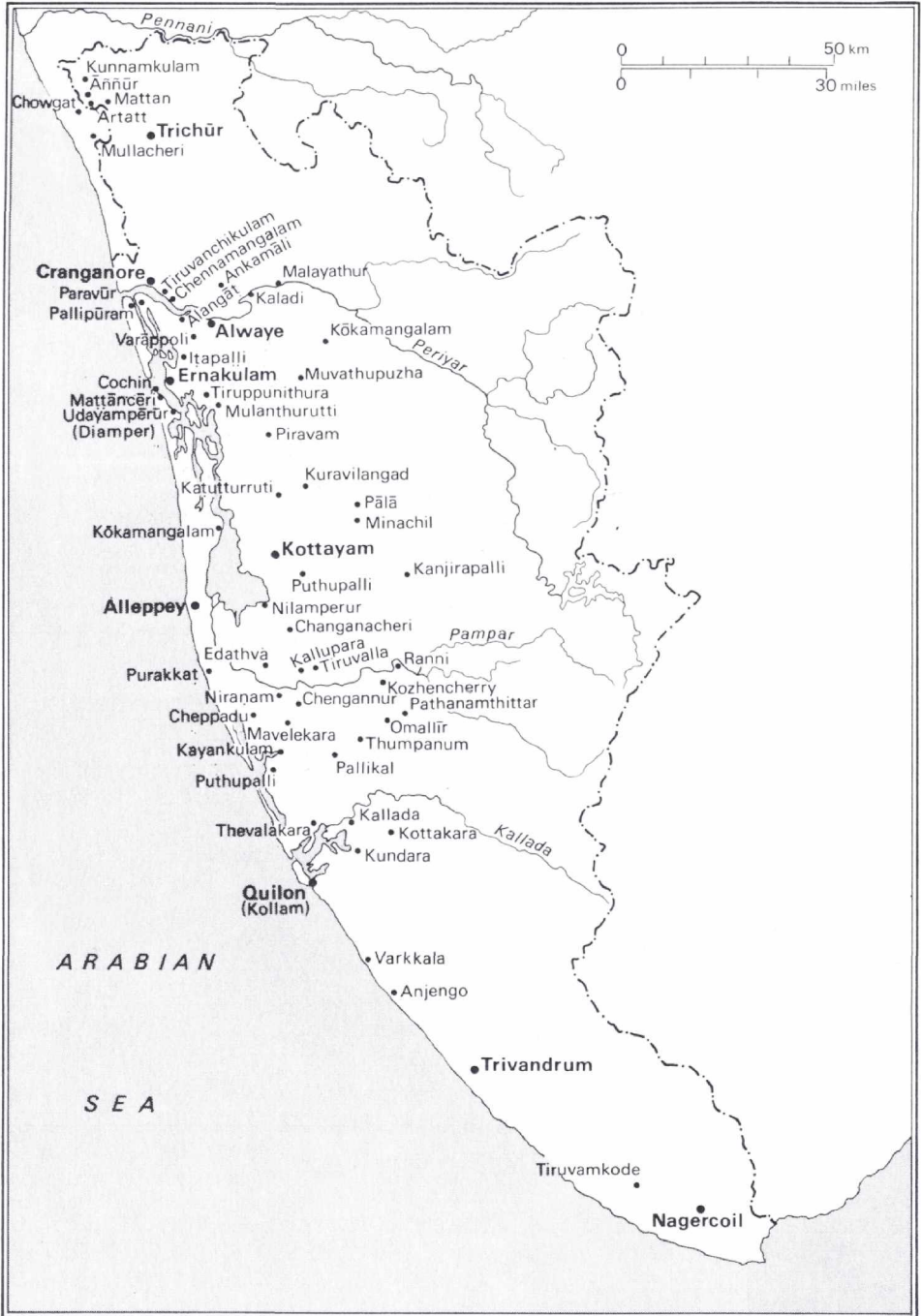
(c) Gupta Empire under Chandragupta II  
(d) Delhi Sultanate in 1236



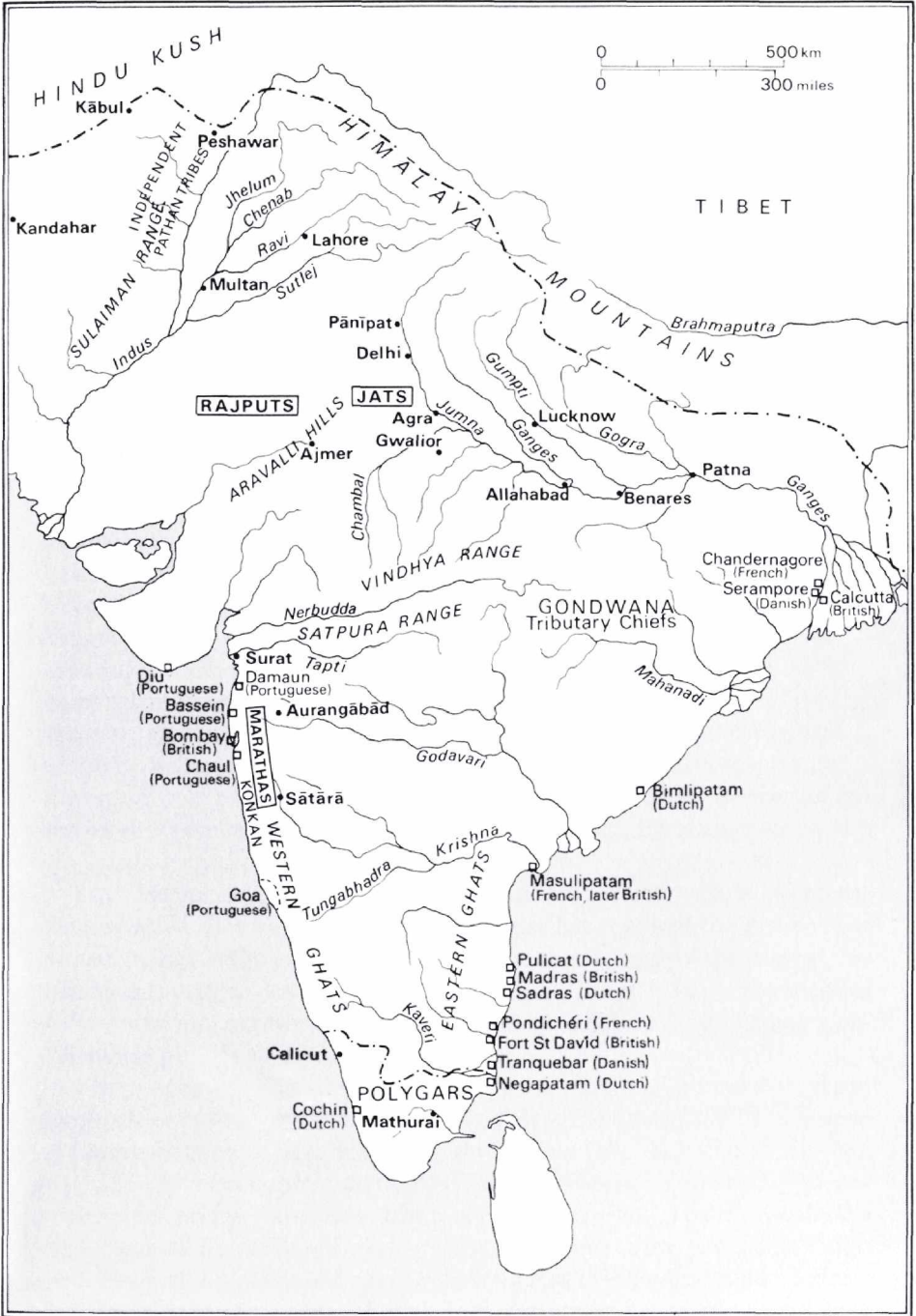
Map 2 India in 1525



Map 3 The Fisher Coast in 1544



Map 4 Syrian Christian Centres



Map 5 India at the Death of Arungzeb (1707)



## PART ONE

# I · The Indian Background

### I LAND, PEOPLE AND LANGUAGE

When the Christian faith first made contact with the Indian sub-continent, the peoples of that area had already had a long experience of life – political, intellectual and religious. It is against this background that the story of Christianity in India has to be displayed.

The sub-continent enjoys a startling variety of scenery and climates, from the highest mountains in the world to the flat Gangetic plain, from the freezing climate of the high mountain valleys to the perpetual summer of Kerala, from the stark dryness of the desert to the exhausting humidity of Bengal.

It might seem that nature intended the great peninsula to be cut off from human habitation. The long coast-line can boast of only one first-class harbour, Bombay, though there are many smaller havens and roadsteads adequate to the needs of the small ships of past ages. A mountain chain almost unbroken for two thousand miles places formidable obstacles in the way of the traveller. The matted jungle of the eastern frontier poses no less serious an impediment to immigration.

Yet from very ancient times human beings have found ways to overcome the obstacles. The spade of the archaeologist has revealed the presence of human beings in the palaeolithic and neolithic ages; some of the present day inhabitants may be descendants of these ancient peoples. In consequence of these invasions continued over many centuries India is a land of many races belonging to at least five different stocks.

The peoples of Mongol or Mongoloid stock are found almost entirely in the north-eastern regions and are closely akin to the other peoples of eastern or south-eastern Asia. Scattered throughout the sub-continent, but especially in the mountainous regions, are the peoples of Austric or proto-Australoid origin, so-called from real or imagined kinship with the aborigines of Australia – dark in colour, small in stature, stocky in build. The Dravidians, belonging to what is known as the Mediterranean family, are also found everywhere, though with the greatest concentration in the south. These form the largest section of the population. But behind them

## *The Indian Background*

one can discern an older people, commonly called the Ādivāsīs, whom the Dravidians, after their coming to India, were able to drive away into the mountains or to reduce to subservience. Finally there are the Āryans, whose arrival in India we can date with some certainty about the middle of the second millennium BC. Their place of origin is uncertain, but there is some probability that they had moved eastwards in a number of separate groups from the great Hungarian plain.

Corresponding to this diversity of race is a great diversity of languages.<sup>1</sup>

Fifteen principal languages are in use in the sub-continent today. Of these, eleven belong to that Indo-European family which is traceable in different areas from Central Asia to the Atlantic Ocean; Bengālī is perhaps spoken by a larger number of people than any other Indian language; western Hindi is perhaps the nearest to the original proto-Āryan tongue spoken by the Āryans when they entered India rather more than three thousand years ago. The other four – Tamil, Telugu, Kanarese and Malayālam, all spoken in the southern part of the peninsula – belong to what is known as the Dravidian group. No near relations to this family of languages have been found in any other part of the world; but philological opinion seems to be coming back to the view put forward by Bishop Caldwell more than a hundred years ago that the congeners of the Dravidian languages are to be sought in the Ugro-Altaic languages spoken in central Asia.<sup>2</sup>

Many diverse forms of speech are found especially in mountainous regions. Among these are distinct languages, spoken in many cases by only small groups of people, and for the most part never reduced to writing until the nineteenth century. Some belong to the Munda or Kherwari family,<sup>3</sup> a branch of the Austric family, which has been found to exist as far apart as Easter Island and Madagascar, and from New Zealand in the south to the Punjāb in the north. Khasi, spoken in the hills of Assam, may be the one representative in India of the wide-spread Mon-Khmer family. Mention should be made of the remarkable language Burushaskī, spoken by 20,000 people where the Hindū Kush and Karakoram mountains meet, for which no affinity has been found with any other language in the world.<sup>4</sup>

India has never had a language which has performed the same unifying service as has been carried out by Mandarin in China, or by Arabic in the middle east. This diversity of languages presents a major political problem in India and Pakistan. It is also a source of perplexity to the would-be religious propagandist, whether Hindu, Christian or Muslim.

Of religion in very ancient times in the sub-continent it is possible to speak only by way of speculation. With the palaeolithic and neolithic peoples it is impossible to establish any communication, since what signs they have left of artistic achievement seem to have no religious significance.



## *A Very Ancient Past*

Undoubtedly very ancient ideas and practices survive among the peoples which have had till recent times no written language, and where everything has been handed on by word of mouth from generation to generation – though these have been more subject to change than is often supposed. But direct awareness of ancient religion becomes possible only with the survival of written sources, and for these we have to await the coming of the Āryans, with their highly developed forms of speech and their notable religious utterances.

### 2 A VERY ANCIENT PAST

Until recently it was taken for granted that our knowledge of India and its faiths begins with the *Rg Veda* and the arrival of the Āryans in India. A chance archaeological discovery and its consequences have carried our knowledge back a thousand years in time.<sup>5</sup>

In 1922 the excavation of the mounds at Mohenjo-dāro in the Lārkanā district of Sind revealed to the excavators an ancient city civilisation where nothing of the kind had previously been supposed to exist. The impulse once given, exploration advanced with an ever accelerated rhythm, and now more than eighty sites spread over an immense area of north-western India have been identified. The two sites, Mohenjo-dāro and Harappā, which so far surpass all others in size and elaboration as to suggest that they were the twin capitals of an imposing realm, are both in the Indus region. For this reason it has become customary to refer to the civilisation there brought to light as the Indus valley civilisation. But it is already clear that this is an unduly restrictive title. Alamgīrpur is on the eastern side of the watershed between the Indus valley and the Gangetic system. Lothal is far to the south, in the area later to be known as Gujarāt. The culture now revealed influenced an area wider than that of Egypt or Mesopotamia, or indeed of any empire earlier than the conquests of Alexander.<sup>6</sup>

The Indus civilisation seems to have reached its maturity in a short period of time; perhaps as a result of this it is marked by a certain lack of inventiveness and of the spirit of adventure. It must have lasted for the best part of a thousand years; yet during all that time there is hardly a trace of experiment and change, of new discovery, and of the working out of new forms for the expression of ideas. The miles of brickwork which have been uncovered, 'however impressive quantitatively and significant sociologically, are aesthetically miles of monotony',<sup>7</sup> 'from an aesthetic point of view as barren as would be the remains of some present-day working town in Lancashire'.<sup>8</sup>

One exception must be made to this rather harsh judgement. The Indus valley craftsmen had developed to a notable height of perfection the art of

## *The Indian Background*

carving. This is revealed specially in the steatite seals, or rather intaglios, of which a considerable number has been recovered from various sites. The skill displayed on these generally minute surfaces carries them to a level equal to the finest manifestations of art from any ancient civilisation.<sup>9</sup>

Knowledge of this ancient civilisation is steadily increasing, as previously unknown sites are excavated and the archaeological data are classified and studied. The progress of discovery can be followed in the successive volumes of the periodical *Ancient India*. But there is still one uncrossed barrier in the way of our understanding the mind and life of these peoples – their language has so far resisted all attempts to decipher it and remains unknown to us. The available evidence is much less than copious; on a number of the beautifully carved seals there are brief inscriptions, in many cases consisting of no more than a single word. It is reasonably certain that a single language prevailed throughout the whole area covered by the culture, that its script is syllabic in character, and that it was read from right to left. Beyond that it is hardly possible at the present time to go.<sup>10</sup>

This gap in our knowledge makes it necessary to speak with hesitation on the subject of the religion of this ancient people. Our museums now contain many specimens of their art. On the seals, and on the numerous terra-cotta figurines or statuettes, many human shapes and the forms of animals and birds are depicted; but it is impossible to say with any certainty whether these have religious significance or no. Some speculations are more credible than others. The large number of identifiably female figures suggests that ideas of fertility played a large part in the thoughts, and perhaps in the worship, of the Indus folk, as of so many ancient peoples. The horned female figures on trees are reminiscent of the *yakṣīs* of later Indian art, and may indicate a belief in, and possibly worship of, tree-spirits and spirits of vegetation. The presence of the bull, in every possible form and posture, may be related to the Mesopotamian cult of the bull as the symbol of fertility and power.

These are no more than reasonable conjectures. Of one figure it can be said that there is general agreement as to its religious character. This is the three-faced seated figure surrounded by animals, which to many recalls *Śiva-paśupati*, Śiva the lord of animals, familiar in much Hindu devotion of later years. Wheeler writes of the 'brooding minatory power of the great god of historic India. Here, if anywhere, may be recognised one of the pre-Āryan elements which were to survive the Āryan invasions and to play a dominant role in the so-called Āryan culture of the post-Vedic period.'<sup>11</sup> Such a judgement involves a number of unproved assumptions. It is not perfectly clear that there is a connection between this striking figure and the god whom later ages called Śiva. Nor is it clear that the animals depicted on the seal are those which in later times were specially associated with Śiva. All we

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can say is that in this very ancient form of Indian religion there appear to be elements which are to be found again much later in the developed cults of India in the period that we call historic.

To the question whether any direct connection can be drawn between the life, art, and religion of the Indus civilisation and the later ages of Indian development, no certain answer can be given. The civilisation, centred on the great cities of Harappā and Mohenjo-dāro, lasted for at least eight hundred years, perhaps rather more, and then disappeared from the face of the earth. For this disappearance various causes have been put forward – extensive flooding; gradual desiccation of the area as a result of which it was unable to support so large a population; attacks by enemies, a view to which the signs of mass slaughter at Mohenjo-dāro lend plausibility. Some have identified these enemies with the invading Āryans. Connections with the later developments of Indian civilisation are at best tenuous; future discoveries may provide more definite answers than can be given at the present time.<sup>12</sup>

### 3 ĀRYAN SOCIETY, LITERATURE AND RELIGION

*Lucida tela diei.* The contrast is great between the ambiguities of the Indus valley and the clear light which shines on the coming of the Āryans and their settlement in India. The great collection of more than a thousand hymns known as the *Rg Veda* was not made to give us historical or sociological information. Yet so vast a corpus of material cannot but afford a great deal of information about the peoples and their ways – where they went and what they ate and drank, what they owned and what they desired, how they worked and fought, how they played, and how they worshipped. These are real people, whom we feel that we can come to know.<sup>13</sup> The *Rg Veda* lays the foundation of that continuity which underlies the whole of Indian history through three thousand years.

We find, then, a vigorous people entering a land of which they intend to take permanent possession. A nomad folk is on the move, with their wives and children, their flocks and all that they have. Much of their time is taken up with fighting the other and perhaps earlier inhabitants, the Dasyus (Dāsas), who may represent a higher civilisation but are compelled in the end to submit to the invaders and to accept a position of inferiority. Geographically, we can locate the invaders in the days of the *Rg Veda* almost exactly on the map of India. They know the lion but not yet the tiger; they are familiar with wheat and barley but not yet with rice. The wide plains of the Punjab, overhung by the ever-present mountains, provide exactly the setting required by the evidence of the hymns.

The religion of the Vedic Indians holds a special fascination for the

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student of such things, since here, as hardly anywhere else, we are able to trace the progress of a gifted and intelligent people from a religion of nature to a vigorous polytheism, behind which the outlines of monotheism can be somewhat dimly discerned. Uṣas, the dawn, is recognisably a goddess, to whom some of the most beautiful hymns in the whole collection are directed.<sup>14</sup> But she appears also as *Uṣases*, the dawns (*ṚV. IV. 51:4*). How far has thought moved, from the physical phenomenon of the welcome day after darkness, in the direction of a being separable from phenomena and to be worshipped in her own right? Among the many deities of the Vedic Indians we encounter the sun (under a variety of names), the winds, the waters; there are gods of the storm, deities hardly more individualised than elemental spirits.

But gods with a certain individuality are beginning to appear.

First and foremost among these is, naturally, Indra the great warrior of the Āryans, who aids them and gives them victory in their endless battles with the Dasyus. He, too, is not unrelated to natural phenomena. When the demon Vṛtra has imprisoned the waters, it is Indra who smites him with his thunderbolt and sets the waters free.<sup>15</sup> But he is well on his way to becoming a personal deity, as in the great hymn *ṚV. II. 12*, with its recurring refrain, 'that, ye people, is Indra':

the wise god, who as soon as he was born surpassed all the other gods in understanding, before whose immense power heaven and earth trembled by reason of the greatness of his virile strength . . . he that is so mighty, concerning whom the people ask 'Where is he?', and of whom they say also 'he is Not', . . . the one without whom none can gain victory, on whom the warriors call for help, who is an adversary equal to any enemy, who shakes that which cannot be shaken – that, ye people is Indra.<sup>16</sup>

M. Winternitz is right in saying that, though other gods at times lay claims to primacy, 'Indra is in the earliest times undoubtedly a king among the gods, just as was Zeus among the Olympian deities of Greece.'<sup>17</sup>

The nearest and friendliest of the gods is Agni, the fire. He is known in three forms – as the domestic god on the hearth of every home, the literal fire; as Agni born of the waters, the lightning that flashes in the clouds; as the supreme Agni, the sun, from which all other fire is kindled. Yet Agni is perhaps less than half personalised; about him there is still a good deal of that literal fire which men have under their control.

Varuṇa comes nearer than any other Vedic god to the idea of God as conceived by Jews and Christians. His messengers speed everywhere and none on earth can escape them:

Two persons may devise some plot, together sitting,  
And think themselves alone; but he the King is there –

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A third, and sees it all. His messengers descend  
Countless from his abode; for ever traversing  
This world, and scanning with a thousand eyes its inmates.  
Whate'er exists within this earth and all within the sky,  
Yea, all that is beyond King Varuṇa perceives.<sup>18</sup>

Among the Vedic gods, it is Varuṇa who not only watches over all things but watches over evil to visit it with its appropriate penalty; he teaches men the nature of repentance and the need for forgiveness: 'If, Varuṇa, we have at any time harmed companions who are near and dear to us, or brothers or neighbours, if we have done harm to fellow-citizens or strangers, forgive what we have done [ 'remove from us the trespass', Griffith].'<sup>19</sup> The sinner afflicted with dropsy pleads his case: 'O Varuṇa, whatever fault, men that we are, we have committed against the people of the gods, if we through lack of understanding have transgressed thy laws, O god, bring not upon us any suffering by reason of this sin'.<sup>20</sup>

Here there are foreshadowings of personal intimacy with a god, and a sense of moral values, that have been fulfilled in some later Hindu developments, but not in all.

The Vedic Indian maintained an attitude of almost genial friendliness towards his gods; he will pay them that which is their due; he expects that in return the gods will do their duty by him, multiplying his cattle and giving him all that his somewhat limited imagination demands. This *do ut des* philosophy accounts for the dominant role that animal sacrifice plays in the worship of the Āryans:

Inextricably bound up with this conception of the divine relation is that other which regards the gods as subject to control by the worshipper, if he but knows the correct means, a motive clearly seen in the selection of the horse as a sacrifice, whereby the swift steed, the sun, may regain his strength and favour his worshippers.<sup>21</sup>

It would, however, be unfair to the Vedic Indians to suppose them incapable of any spiritual ideal beyond the satisfaction of their own desires. In the *Rg Veda* three notable terms look beyond the nature gods and the rites by which their favour is sought and maintained – *ṛta*, *brahman* and *dharma*. The second and third of these have had a long and famous history in Indian religion – *brahman* as the hidden mysterious reality which is the inmost being of all things; *dharma* as that complex of rights and obligations which holds the social order together. In the Vedic period *ṛta* is the most important of the three and the most difficult to define. It is that invisible moral order by which things have their rightness, the 'so-it-ought-to-be', which is there from the beginning, and which the gods cannot alter. At times *ṛta* appears as a great self-contained independent power; at others 'it is the expression, guided and protected by the gods, of their will directed towards

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the establishment of the *ṛta* in the world . . . The man who is loyal to *ṛta* finds his wishes come to fulfilment, for him the winds blow softly.’<sup>22</sup>

A small number of philosophical hymns show that the Vedic Indians were not incapable of abstract thought.<sup>23</sup> Most famous of all is the so-called Hymn of Creation (*RV*. x.129):

- (1) There was not the non-existent nor the existent then; there was not the air nor the heaven which is beyond. What did it contain? Where? In whose protection? Was there water, unfathomable, profound?
- (2) There was not death nor immortality then. There was not the beacon of night, nor of day. That one breathed, windless, by its own power. Other than that there was not anything beyond.
- (3) Darkness was in the beginning hidden by darkness; indistinguishable, this all was water. That which, coming into being, was covered with the wind, that One arose through the power of heat.
- (6) Who knows truly? Who shall here declare, whence it has been produced, whence is this creation? By the creation of this (universe) the gods (come) afterwards; who then knows whence it has arisen?
- (7) Whence this creation has arisen; whether he founded it or did not; he who in the highest heaven is its surveyor, he only knows – or else he knows not.<sup>24</sup>

The story of the Vedic religion is in one respect peculiar. It is still to the devout Hindu inspired revelation; yet the vast majority of those who call themselves Hindus know little, if anything, of it. Many have read not a single Vedic hymn. The names of the Vedic gods are unfamiliar. Most of its rituals belong only to history and not to practice. And yet it would be a grave mistake to under-estimate its influence on all that was to follow. Many of the *mantras* used today in solemn ceremonies go back to Vedic or to early post-Vedic times. The pious Brāhman begins every day with the recitation, in Sanskrit, of the *Gāyatrī*, ‘let us meditate on that excellent glory of the Divine Vivifier [Sun]; may he enlighten our understandings’.<sup>25</sup> And every Hindu is touched at some point or another by one of the three branches of development out of which classical Hinduism grew in the post-Vedic age.

### 4 CLASSICAL DEVELOPMENTS OF HINDUISM

These three branches of development correspond almost exactly to what have come to be known as the three ways – the *karma-mārga*, the way of action; the *jñāna-mārga*, the way of wisdom; and the *bhakti-mārga*, the way of adoring devotion.

The way of action finds expression in the series of books called the *Brāhmaṇas*, sprawling works, which contain a great variety of elements, including folk tales;<sup>26</sup> but the greater part of which is taken up with the sacrifices and their significance in the life of man. Sacrifice holds the centre

### *Classical Developments of Hinduism*

of the picture; every part of the ritual must be carried out with careful circumspection, lest some trivial error may deprive the sacrifice of its effective power. Only the Brāhmins know the ritual in full; this explains their demand for full supremacy in all the affairs of the people – kings may rule, but only by favour of the Brāhmins whom it is their first duty to support. Indeed,

of a truth there are two kinds of gods; the gods indeed are the gods, and the Brāhmins who have heard and recite what they have heard are the gods upon earth; . . . the offerings of the sacrifice are for the gods, presents for the gods upon earth . . . These two kinds of gods, if they are satisfied bring (the offerer) to the blessedness of heaven.<sup>27</sup>

M. Winternitz draws a contrast between these Brāhmin claims and the modesty of the Hebrew seer, who asks, 'Lord, what is man that thou considerest him, and the son of man that thou rememberest him?' (Psalm 8).<sup>28</sup> Such expressions are not wholly lacking in the Indian books, but it is not from utterances such as these that these writings derive their special character.

A tradition of such rigid formality as that of the *Brāhmaṇas* could hardly satisfy all the spiritual needs of a vigorous and gifted people. A reaction was bound to come, and come it did in the development of the second way, the way of wisdom. The *Upaniṣads*,<sup>29</sup> the books of secret wisdom, are the record of this quest. A number of hints in the more ancient of these works suggest that they record also episodes in the struggle for leadership between the Brāhmins and the second order, the Kṣatriyas or warriors, from among whom the rulers are chosen. The Brāhmins had established a monopoly of the ritual and external manifestations of Āryan religion; the Kṣatriyas will take the lead in the search for ultimate reality and truth and for a religion based on these.

As for the *Vedas*, so for the *Upaniṣads*, no exact chronology can be established; but it is probable that the more ancient among these works belong to the period between the composition of the *Brāhmaṇas* and the rise of Buddhism in the second half of the sixth century BC. They belong, that is to say, to that extraordinary period of creative genius, which was marked in Greece by the earlier Ionic philosophers, in Israel by the greatest of the writing prophets, in Iran by Zarathustra, and in China by Confucius and his predecessors.

It is impossible to reduce the *Upaniṣads* to system. They contain much that is traditional and much that is trivial; in places they still move in the world of the Vedic sacrifices. But this should not be allowed to obscure the adventurousness of the thinkers of the *Upaniṣads*, and the radical newness of

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the worlds of philosophy and religion which they explored. The essential questions put by all of them are the same: What really is? What is the unity behind the multiplicity of phenomena? What is the nature of man, and what his place in the universe? The central answer of all is the same – the real self in man, the *Ātman*, is essentially the same as the inmost being of the universe, the *Brahman*. He who comes to apprehend this will be set free from the phenomenal world and from separate being, and will recover that inward unity with true being which he had lost or allowed to become atrophied through absorption in the temporal. A concentrated expression of this view is to be found in *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* III.14:

This soul of mine within the inmost heart is smaller than a grain of rice or a barley-corn, or a mustard-seed or a grain of millet, or the kernel of a grain of millet; this soul of mine within the inmost heart is greater than the earth, greater than the atmosphere, greater than the sky, greater than all these worlds; containing all activities, all desires, all odours, all tastes, it encompasses all the world; it speaks not, is concerned for nothing. This soul of mine within the inmost heart is this same *Brahman*. When I depart from this body, I shall be united with him. If anyone attains this knowledge, for him of a truth there is no further doubt.

So spoke Śaṅḍilya, yea, Śaṅḍilya.<sup>30</sup>

In a great variety of expressions, parables, illustrations this teaching of the mysterious unity of the Soul with the All is repeated. Indian philosophy and religion have followed many separate paths. But at the heart of almost all of them is this same teaching. The great *Upaniṣads* have laid their hand on all that is to follow in the world of India, and even on the minds of some who have professed the Christian faith.

The Āryan Indians were a hardy people, courageous in the face of life and carefree in the face of death, without a trace of that *Weltschmerz*, that abiding melancholy, which has rested upon so much of the Hindu tradition in life and thought. It is in the later *Upaniṣads* that the shadows begin to fall.<sup>31</sup> The law of *karma*, the deed, the principle of inexorable retribution and its consequences in the endless wheel of birth and repeated existence, is beginning to cast its long shadows on the Indian mind:

‘Yajñavalkya’, says Ārthabhāga, ‘when a man dies and all the parts of him are scattered in different directions, where is that man?’ [summary].

‘Ārthabhāga, my dear, take me by the hand. We two alone desire to have knowledge of this. It is not convenient to speak of this, when others are present’.

So they two went apart and spoke with one another. What they spoke of was the Deed (*karma*); what they praised was the Deed. Of a truth by the good deed man becomes good, and by the evil he becomes evil.<sup>32</sup>

Yet with all this sadness the *Upaniṣads* are a message of deliverance. When a man has attained to this secret wisdom, so runs the formula, ‘he comes not back’; he has been delivered from the chain and the burden, from



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the wheel of endless existence. At times the expression of this sense of deliverance comes near to ecstasy:

Therefore, having this knowledge, having become calm, subdued, quiet, patiently enduring and collected . . . free from evil, free from impurity, free from doubt, he becomes a Brāhman (knower of *Brahman*) . . . Verily that great unborn Soul, undecaying, undying, immortal, fearless, is *Brahman*. Verily *Brahman* is without fear; he who knows this becomes the fearless *Brahman*.<sup>33</sup>

### 5 DIVERGENT STREAMS

Historical order now directs attention to three movements – Jainism, Buddhism, the influence of Greece or rather Macedon – each of which might have become a determinative force in the development of Indian religion, but each of which, through the chances of historical circumstance, became marginal rather than central in the process of development.

Jainism and Buddhism have been described as twin sisters, arising in the same period and on the basis of similar presuppositions; each in part, no doubt, as a reaction against the esoteric wisdom of the *Brāhmaṇas* and the difficult philosophical propositions of the *Upaniṣads*, and providing for the ordinary man a way of salvation that will be within his intellectual grasp.

But how different has been their development. The one has become a world religion, the other limited to the country of its birth; one has shewn itself capable of extension, development and expansion, the other has remained unalterably in its traditional system. Outside India hundreds of millions of human beings confess themselves to be Buddhists. Between a million and a quarter and a million and a half in western India look back to Mahāvīra (more shortly Vīra), the hero or the overcomer, the *Jina*.<sup>34</sup>

In basic principle Jainism is simple. Its final and highest law is that of *ahimsā*, doing no harm to any. It carries to extreme lengths the principle that no life is to be destroyed; the conscientious Jain guards with the most extreme care against the possible destruction of even the lowest form of life, though he is not allowed to carry this to the point at which his own life might be destroyed. There are, moreover, exacting rules of asceticism, especially in the field of sexual chastity.

Man is alone and is cast back upon himself. It is his actions which bring reward or punishment here below or in the world beyond. A thousand rules for the winning of the one and the avoidance of the other hem in the daily life of the Jaina . . . The almost grotesque exaggeration (of the rules) in Jaina practice must not be allowed to rob them of their original nobility.<sup>35</sup>

In spite of the achievements of scholarship, Mahāvīra remains a somewhat shadowy figure. In the study of the origins of the religion of the Buddha we

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are nearer to historical reality. Although the traditions of early Buddhism were written down several centuries after the events which they profess to record, and though the historical core is everywhere encrusted with a mass of legendary material, the careful work of scholars over a century has been successful to a considerable extent in enucleating the historical from the legendary.<sup>36</sup> It is possible to make, with reasonable confidence, the following affirmations:

The life of Siddhārta, better known as Gautama the Buddha, falls within the sixth and fifth centuries before Christ. 563 and 483 are generally given as approximately the dates of his birth and death, though this chronology has not commended itself to all the experts.

Siddhārta was born of an aristocratic clan at Kapilavastu in the *terai*, that part of Nepal which lies in the Gangetic plain. For some years he sought deliverance along the traditional Hindu path of extreme asceticism; but, finding no salvation there, he adopted the middle path between absorption in the world and asceticism carried to intolerable lengths.

Then there came to him, in a period of intense meditation at Bodh-gayā, the Awakening in which he saw the solution of all human problems – the centrality of suffering in human life. This understanding came to be crystallised in the four Noble Truths, and the doctrine of the Noble Eight-fold Way.

Not long after this experience, the Awakened One began to preach,<sup>37</sup> this ministry lasted for a period of about forty years. The content of all this preaching was *deliverance*; one of the sayings which can with great probability be ascribed to the founder is this – as in all the seas there is but one taste, the taste of salt, so in all the *dhamma* (teaching), there is but one taste, the taste of deliverance.

Since this doctrine is intended for the ordinary man, it is given in Pāli, a much simplified form of the classical Sanskrit. This rule is observed in the southern (*Theravāda*) form of Buddhism, whereas the northern (*Mahāyāna*) finds expression in Sanskrit, Chinese, and other tongues.

By the time of the death of the founder, his followers were well organised in a monastic order, to which, with the rather reluctant consent of the founder, an order of nuns had been added.

The final deliverance which the Buddhist seeks is known by the term *nirvāṇa*, which is sometimes understood as implying extinction as complete as that undergone by a flame when it is blown out; but at other times seems to mean perfect and incomparable bliss. A similar apparent paradox is well known in various forms of mystical religion.<sup>38</sup>

From the maze of the traditions emerges a figure, distinct, recognisable and attractive. The Buddha is genial, patient, courteous, not without an occasional gleam of humour, tranquil, benevolent and kind. What he has left

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to his followers, in spite of constant emphasis on suffering as the dominant element in human life, is no cheerless or depressing doctrine. On the contrary, Buddhism as a religion has always been marked by serenity, as the founder was serene. In this life *nirvāna* may escape me; but it is no unattainable ideal, and if I follow the last recorded words of the Master, 'Strive without ceasing', in due course I shall attain.

Buddhism differs from almost all other forms of religion in India in that it has had from the beginning a strong missionary emphasis. In the *Mahā-parinibbānasutta* the Awakened One is quoted as saying, 'I shall not die, O Evil One, until this pure religion of mine shall have become successful, prosperous, widespread, and popular in all its full extent – until in a word it shall have been well proclaimed among men.'<sup>39</sup> The Buddha himself set the proclamation in motion over a limited area of northern India, and, as a gospel of deliverance for ordinary men and women, it soon became popular in all ranks of society. For a wider extension it had to await the coming of the philosopher king, who would make the propagation of this faith one of the main purposes of his royal rule.

Āśoka (272–232 BC) came nearer than any early ruler to establishing in India the authority of a single monarch. He has made known to us the limits of his dominions in a multitude of inscriptions which have been found in places as far apart as valleys overshadowed by the Himālayas and the Hindū Kush, the territory later known as Mysore, the borders of Assam, and the shores of the Arabian sea.<sup>40</sup>

The most important event in the life of Āśoka was his conversion to the Buddhist faith. According to his own account this took place as a result of the horror inspired in his mind by the slaughter and devastation caused by the Kalinga wars. The rest of his life was largely occupied in the dissemination of the faith in which he himself had found satisfaction.

In Rock Edict XIII he tells us that he had written to 'the Greek king named Amtiyoga, and beyond the realm of that Amtiyoga in the lands of the four kings Tulamaya, Antekina, Maka and Alikyashudala'.<sup>41</sup> The kings have been identified with a good deal of plausibility as Antiochus II of Syria (261–246 BC), Ptolemy II of Egypt (285–247 BC), Antigonus Gonatas of Macedonia (276–239 BC), Magas of Cyrene (*d.* 252 BC), and Alexander of Epirus (276–255 BC). It is not evident whether Āśoka's recommendation of the Buddhist way had any effect on the minds of these sovereigns. Āśoka had greater success with another of his missionary enterprises. It may be taken as historical fact that he sent his son (or possibly his brother) Mahinda (Mahendra) to King Tissa of Ceylon (253–213 BC). Both king and inhabitants seem to have been readily accessible to the message which Mahinda brought; it was not long before Ceylon became, as it has remained, in the main a Buddhist country.

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Buddhism has undergone the same strange fate as Christianity – of being extinguished in its original homeland, and prospering far beyond its limits.<sup>42</sup> Through recent conversions there are once again Buddhists in India; but for the best part of a thousand years there were very few.<sup>43</sup>

Sixty years before Aśoka came to the throne the waters of Macedon had flowed into the Indus. The Greeks had appeared in India. In 326 BC Alexander and his soldiers stood on the banks of the river Beas. In the following year they began the long withdrawal to the West.

The invasion of Alexander has left a permanent mark on the study of religion in India, in that it has provided us with a reasonable chronological framework for the history of India as a whole. Indian writers were uninterested in matters of chronology. The Greeks were much more concerned for accuracy in this field, and the events of Alexander's campaigns can be dated with almost perfect precision. Working backwards and forwards from these data, the patient labour of scholars has produced a good deal of order out of the pre-existing chaos. Much still remains obscure; but the epochs of India's religious history have become reasonably clear to us.

The Greeks maintained kingdoms in north-west India for almost three centuries. Yet their influence was surprisingly limited. Knowledge of the existence of the Greek-speaking world was doubtless of advantage to India. Some splendid coins were produced. Other forms of Greek art may have exercised a measure of influence. But, in the religious sphere, there is hardly any trace of influence; indeed, such evidence as we have suggests that the Greeks were more likely to accept Indian influences and to turn Buddhist than were the Indians to become Stoics or Epicureans.<sup>44</sup>

Buddhism eventually died out in India.<sup>45</sup> Jainism, after a period of extensive prosperity, dwindled to its present limited effectiveness. The Greeks came and went, and left hardly a trace. The main stream of Indian religious development flowed in other channels. To that main stream we now return; and this brings us directly to the most famous of all Indian religious classics, the *Bhagavadgītā*, the Lord's Song.

## 6 THE CENTRAL TRADITION

The wide-spread success of both Buddhism and Jainism seemed to threaten the very existence of Hinduism. It became clear that, if Hinduism was to survive as a generally accepted form of faith, it must find a way to take shape as a gospel for the ordinary man. This need was met by the *bhakti* movement, the way of personal devotion. Quintessential as the expression of North Indian *bhakti* is the *Bhagavadgītā*.

## The Central Tradition

The *Gītā*, as we know it today, lies embedded in the *Mahābhārata*, the first of the two great epics of ancient India. This immense work is in essence the story of the eighteen-day battle in the civil war between the Kauravas and the Pāṇḍavas on the plains of Kurukṣetra; but, in its full extent and as it exists today, it contains material of every shape and kind, and drawn from the experience of many different periods. The *Gītā* is simply an episode at the beginning of book VI. Various views have been held as to the date of the poem. Similarities between the language of the *Gītā* and Johannine phraseology have led some Christian scholars to suppose that the *Gītā* may be post-Christian and indebted to the teaching of the New Testament.<sup>46</sup> Closer investigation has shewn this view to be extremely improbable, and it is not held by any serious scholar today. While certainty is not to be had, there is at least a probability that the work dates from the second century BC.

Ostensibly the poem records a dialogue held on the field of battle between the Pāṇḍava hero Arjuna and Kṛṣṇa, who, acting as charioteer to the hero, gradually reveals himself as the incarnation of the supreme reality. Arjuna, horrified at the carnage imminent in a civil war, declares his intention not to fight. The theme unfolds itself in the form of a series of arguments by which Kṛṣṇa sets himself to persuade Arjuna that he must lay aside his scruples and do his duty on the field of battle. Killing and being killed are illusory experiences – the inmost soul is not affected by either. Arjuna is a Kṣatriya, a warrior, and caste-duty, that *dharma* by which all things are held together in order, demands that he should do his duty. This means action, and action is held to bind man to the wheel of rebirth. But this is not necessarily so, since action without regard for consequences and without desire for the fruit of action loses its binding power.

Gradually these secondary arguments yield place to the central theme of the poem. The way of *bhakti*, of unconditional devotion to the god of a man's choice, is the road to deliverance, and this can be found by anyone who truly seeks it, without regard to origin, to caste-affiliation, to sex, and even to ethical disposition (IX.30–3).

The philosopher Śaṅkara (eighth century AD) finds the quintessence of the *Gītā* in XI.55:

Whose work is unto me, whose goal I am, my votary, free from attachment, void of enmity to any being, he comes to me, O son of Pāṇḍu (trans. W.D.P. Hill).

A fuller statement of the same truth is found in XII.13–16:

He who hates not any being, he who is friendly and compassionate, without a thought of mine or I, regarding pain and pleasure as all one, long-suffering, ever content, ascetic, self-restrained, of firm conviction, with mind and reason dedicated to me – that man is dear to me, my worshipper devout. He by whom the world is not

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disturbed and who is not disturbed by the world, free from joy, impatience, fear and agitation – that man is dear to me.

He who hopes for nothing, pure, adept, impartial, free from trembling, abandoning (the fruit of) every enterprise – that man is dear to me, my worshipper devout (trans. W.D.P. Hill).

‘That man is dear to me’. This seems to strike a new note in Indian religion, in which the idea of a personal relationship to the divine only slowly came to birth. In the final Reading (xviii), this becomes even more intimate; several times over, Kṛṣṇa says to Arjuna, ‘Thou art dear to me.’<sup>47</sup>

This teaching is introduced by the magnificent theophany in Reading xi, in which Arjuna in answer to his own request is allowed to see Kṛṣṇa as he really is, the Supreme from which all things issue and into which all things pass away. This passage, unique or almost unique in Hindu religious literature, may be compared to the theophanies in the religious literature of the Jews, in which we find the same combination of terror and delight.

It is impossible to over-estimate the part which the *Gītā* has played in the religious life of India. It has been translated into all the main languages of the sub-continent, as well as into many languages of both West and East. Philosophers of many schools have expounded it, and found in it their own deepest apprehensions of reality. Countless Hindus know it by heart, and recite it daily in their devotions. Christians, while recognising differences of conviction at certain points, yet find in it a language that they can understand, and thoughts to which in large measure they can assent. It was *bhakti* of the type set forth in the *Gītā* which made Hinduism again a viable faith for ordinary men, which enabled it slowly to emerge successful from its conflicts with rival faiths, and to re-establish itself as the inspiration of large sections of the Indian population.

### 7 CHANGE WITHIN CONTINUITY

There is continuity in the religious history of India, but this should not conceal from us the magnitude of the revolution which has taken place since early times.

The changes that have taken place may be considered under five aspects:

The religion of the Āryans was aniconic. We have no record of any visual representation of the divine from ancient days. Today India is a land of innumerable images.

The Āryans had no temples. Their worship was carried out under the open sky, in the place of sacrifice arranged according to the requirements laid down by the priests.<sup>48</sup> India is today *par excellence* the land of temples; especially in the cities of the south they break the skyline in impressive majesty.

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In Āryan religion animal sacrifice was deeply embedded, with the horse-sacrifice as its culmination and its crown. Though blood sacrifice continues today in the darkness of night in countless Indian villages, the offerings in the daylight temples are of flowers and fruit and ghee, and any shedding of blood is strictly forbidden.

In the *Veda* there is little sense of any personal relatedness to a god understood and worshipped as personal. Gods were revered and feared because they are strong. In those early days the expression 'the love of God' would hardly have been understood. Today in every part of India there are *bhakti* movements, characterised by an intense desire for self-fulfilment through devotion to a god recognised and worshipped in at least quasi-personal terms.

In the *R̥g Veda* there is only one reference to the caste system, and that in the tenth book (*R̥V.* x.90) which is generally thought to be later than the others. Contemporary Hindu society is still dominated by the system of many castes, to one of which every Hindu belongs by birth and which he cannot change.<sup>49</sup>

Whence did all these changes come? Some developments may have come about through Jain or Buddhist influence. But we cannot exclude the possibility that some at least are due to the older Dravidian traditions which the Āryans found in existence when they entered India, the continuing influence of which may have been greater than has been generally recognised.<sup>50</sup>

Language provides the first evidence that this kind of influence was exercised upwards from below. The main Dravidian languages have a number of consonants, to be found in hardly any other group of languages, produced by turning the tongue as far back as possible in the direction of the throat. These 'cerebral' or retroflex consonants are not encountered in any other Āryan language; the presence of all of them in Sanskrit suggests that both intonation and vocabulary have been affected by the speech of those whom the Āryans were pleased to regard as an inferior people.<sup>51</sup>

Dravidian influences may perhaps be recognised in Indian attempts to represent divinity in one and another of the many possible iconic forms.

The Āryans in India, over a period of many centuries, seem to have felt no need for any visual representation of the gods whom they worshipped. The earliest surviving monuments of Indian religious art, all related to the Buddhist tradition, do not go beyond the representation of the Teacher in purely symbolic form – the wheel of doctrine, the blazing pillar, the trident of the Buddha, the doctrine and the community – symbols which have maintained their vitality in the Buddhist tradition up to the present day. But gradually piety began to demand an object of adoration more akin to the

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warmth of the devotion which the worshipper directed towards him; visual representation of the Buddha began. The artist in India had little doubt of the direction in which he should look for inspiration and guidance. The art of Gandhāra was skilled in the depiction of the human form. It used to be held that Gandhāra art was derived directly from the Greek. Now the view more commonly held is that this art is Roman rather than Greek in its origins, maintained in being by the still continuing contacts between the Rome of the emperors and north-west India; it was thus derived from an art which was itself derivative. Western art, as has been well said, 'sought to make an aesthetically beautiful form by portraying human figures which were models of physical perfection and athletic vigour'.<sup>52</sup> This tradition was able to produce figures of striking beauty, a kind of Apollonian Buddha; but it had no roots in India, and, though its influence was extensive and long-lasting, this was not the religious art that was to endure in India.

There was another tradition already existent not far from the centres where Gandhāra art was being produced; it is associated especially with the city of Mathurā. Whereas Gandhāra art is for the most part static, this other tradition sought after skill in the representation of movement, and in its extraordinary vitality reflects living and careful attention to the surrounding world of nature. When art of this type turns to religious themes, it is concerned with abstract spiritual concepts which have to be translated into physical shapes.<sup>53</sup> This means that such art can never be primarily or exclusively representational. The image of the Buddha was so far fixed by tradition that the artist could not depart too far from it; but he used his own inspiration to impart to the figure an awe-inspiring quality appropriate to the one who was now regarded as the manifestation of divine perfection. In many of the sculptures of the period there is a striking contrast between the statuesque tranquillity of the central figure and the vigour, variety and at times distortion of the secondary figures by which it is surrounded. It seems that we have here evidence of a tension between the Āryan world and a more ancient world in which the specifically Indian genius finds its expression.

In Amarāvathī and Nāgārjunikoṇḍa, the greatest centres of the Āndhra culture, we are already in South India, and see art carried a step further in the direction of purely Indian inspiration. The Buddha is still present, but it is the subordinate figures that catch the eye in the dramatic character of their groupings and the subtle variety of their movements. 'Quite unique to this art is an element that apparently derives from southern India: fondness for slender and supple figures, shown either in movement, in a dance posture, or standing in a graceful and nonchalant attitude.'<sup>54</sup> Once again there is a startling contrast between the serenity of the central figure, who has passed beyond all the changes and chances of human life, and the wild and flexible variety of the other figures, human, animal, or purely fantastic, by which it is surrounded.



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As we travel still further south, the Āryan recedes yet further into the background, and is replaced by elements of fantasy and distortion. We are clearly on the way to the most characteristic of all the Indian images of the divine – the Natarāja, the heavenly dancer,<sup>55</sup> endlessly and magnificently shewn forth in stone and bronze and every other material on which the hand of the plastic craftsman has been able to take hold.<sup>56</sup>

The Vedic Indian was content to worship under the clear vault of heaven in the place appointed for sacrifice. Climatic conditions may have suggested the advantage of having certain covered places for worship; but this could hardly have been the source of so radical a change. The devout Muslim is not likely to regard the mosque as a place in which God is specially present: it is simply a convenience to the worshipper to have a place set apart in which the people of God can become visible, and carry out its ceremonies as a community. The Hindu regards the temple as a place in which God dwells. Once again the origin of the change may be sought in Buddhist religion; the Stūpa grew out of the distribution of the relics of the Buddha and the development of great edifices in which the relics could be housed in a dignity suited to their pre-eminence. In the same way the Hindu temple contains something regarded as specially holy, and generally guarded from the eyes of the profane. Not every image will be housed in a temple; many stand by the wayside, usually under the shade of a tree, but otherwise unprotected from sun or wind or rain. Nor is every image to be worshipped. If it is to be set up for worship, it will first undergo the ceremony called the *prāna-prathiṣṭhā*, the invocation (lit. establishment) of life; from then on it is neither wood nor stone but a habitation of the divine. So the Hindu can make pilgrimage to the temple, and in the rite of *darshan* can experience the divine as visible reality. It cannot be shewn with certainty that this process of development was purely Dravidian, but no certain explanation lies ready to hand elsewhere; the process is consonant with the Dravidian mentality and the Dravidian understanding of the world.

Animal sacrifice, so prominent in the Vedas and in the older sections of the Vedānta, has entirely disappeared from later orthodox Hindu practice. Jain and Buddhist influences may have been at work. Respect for all life and the avoidance of harm to any (*ahimsā*) is a cardinal doctrine of both these religious systems. But it is doubtful whether the change can be entirely accounted for by such influences. In the *Bhagavadgītā* (IX.26) Kṛṣṇa says ‘If any earnest soul makes offering to me with devotion, of leaf or flower or fruit or water, that offering of devotion I enjoy’ (trans. W.D.P. Hill). Does not the *Gītā* here look away from the long tradition of blood-sacrifice and forward to the bloodless offerings, the *pūjā*, which is carried out in the countless temples of the later Hindu tradition? This may be reckoned as part of the Hindu answer to the Jain and Buddhist challenge; but the answer may have been drawn from an older and pre-Āryan phase of Indian religion.

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In the Vedic tradition there is little that could be called personal religion or devotion to a personal god. In the *Gītā* we find, fully developed, the devotion to a particular god which is expressed in the Sanskrit term *bhakti*. *Bhakti* – the word can hardly be translated into English – has been well characterised by Jan Gonda as signifying

not a belief, but a loving and sincere adoration and self-surrender, a burning personal devotion, a deeply emotional and mystical attachment, together with a desire to be united with the object of this adoration, that object being a personal god of whose reality the worshipper is convinced – or more correctly, because the worshipper holds firmly that he himself is essentially a part of that reality.<sup>57</sup>

If the origins of *bhakti* are not to be found in the ancient Hindu tradition, where are they to be sought? The possibility of Buddhist influence cannot be excluded. But it is likely that the devotion to the person of the Buddha, which is so marked a feature of the *Mahāyāna* form of Buddhism, developed later than the date at which the *Bhagavadgītā* was written. It is possible that, in *bhakti*, we are dealing with something that is non-Āryan and authentically Dravidian.

In the *Bhagavadgītā* the teacher and the object of *bhakti* is Kṛṣṇa, serving as the charioteer of the Pāṇḍava hero Arjuna. It is by no means incredible that, in the progress of the Āryans across north India, there may have taken place an immense and fratricidal conflict, of which racial memories persisted after much else that was historical had been forgotten. This suggests, though it does not necessarily imply, that there may have been a real and historical Kṛṣṇa.

If so, how are we to think of him? Has a purely human hero become confused with a pre-existing local divinity, and so been gradually raised to the level of the Supreme? Or is the doctrine of *avatāra*, incarnation, startlingly introduced in the Fourth Reading of the *Gītā* (iv. 5–8), invoked to account for the special prowess of a hero in terms of a divine indwelling such as could hardly have been imagined by an Āryan?<sup>58</sup>

In later Indian art and legend Kṛṣṇa almost always appears as ‘the Dark One’. Now the Dark People are the Dasyus, by contrast with the fair Āryans. What more likely than that the Pāṇḍavas in their extremity should have called in to aid them a chieftain and warrior of the other race, that this warrior by his services in battle secured incorporation into the family of the conquerors, but that his distinctiveness was never forgotten? If so, it may be thought possible that the intruder brought in with him a concept of the divine unknown to the Aryans, of a god who could say to his worshipper ‘thou art dear to me’ (*BG*, xviii.64), and make the promise that ‘by his grace thou shalt win to peace supreme, the eternal resting place’ (xviii.62). We shall have occasion later to note the strength of the affirmation in Hindu

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tradition that *bhakti* was born in the south – and the south is *par excellence* the land of the Dravidian. It is at least possible that this crowning achievement of Hindu faith came about through the union of the Āryan awareness of the transcendence of the divine with a Dravidian sense of the possibility of its immanence.

For more than two thousand years Hindu society has been held together by the caste system. Amid all the shifting complexities of Hindu life and thought this remains constant. To be a Hindu, no more is necessary than to believe in transmigration and reincarnation, and to have been born into one of the Hindu castes. There is no other way of becoming a Hindu; into one caste a man is born, and in that he must remain. His greatest merit, and the possibility of reward in another existence, arises from the punctilious fulfilment of the duties of his caste. The system has given to Indian society immense stability and has enabled it to hold firm through all the vicissitudes of invasion, disaster and change. Man and woman alike know their appointed place in society and can fulfil with rectitude the duties enjoined upon them in the moment of birth.<sup>59</sup>

In the *R̥g Veda* there is only the one allusion to the traditional division of society into four castes.<sup>60</sup> By the time of the *Bhagavadgītā*, caste and caste-duty are recognised as firmly established. Much of the argument, especially in the Second Reading, turns on the duty laid on Arjuna by his birth as a Kṣatriya to fight and to kill. Many theories of the origin of caste have been held; none perhaps is adequate to account for all the complex phenomena of the system. It is possible, however, that we have here again to do with the age-long tension between Āryan and non-Āryan. *Varna*, one of the commonest terms for caste, means 'colour'. Āryans are white: Dravidians are black, or as near as makes no difference.<sup>61</sup> The Āryans had come into India as roving pastoral bands, in which presumably there were many more men than women. Inevitably the conquerors took wives from among the darker people. The Āryans saw their distinctiveness disappearing, being swamped in the ocean of the darker people. It would seem a simple solution to decree that, in the event of such unions taking place, the children would belong to the group of their mother and not to that of their father. The distinction between the 'twice-born' and the rest, once made, was to become a deeply rooted part of the Indian view of society, and an essential part of the Indian religious consciousness.

For a century the eyes of scholars have been so dazzled by the brilliance of Āryan civilisation that little attention was paid to the Dravidian world, and to what may have been happening in it in the period under survey. But the suggestions made in these pages as to the possible effects of the Dravidian presence on Āryan language, culture and religion make it desirable to round

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off the picture of the Indian background by giving some attention to what was happening in the mainly Dravidian areas of the south, in which Āryan penetration had begun before the end of the period we are surveying but was still far short of total dominance.

It had come to be taken almost for granted that the south had no civilisation of its own, and that it entered into the civilised world only through stimulation from the Āryan north. This is a view that can no longer be sustained. The study of the megalithic monuments of the Deccan, as yet very imperfectly carried out, indicates the presence of a considerable civilisation centuries before the beginning of the Christian era. Recent studies of the diffusion of iron in India indicate that the art of smelting was known in South India from a very early date, and quite possibly through local discovery rather than through a process of cultural diffusion from the north.<sup>62</sup>

The somewhat tenuous evidences of bare archaeology have now been reinforced by the discovery and elucidation of inscriptions in the Brāhmī script, some of which certainly date from a period earlier than the beginning of the Christian era. The first discovery was made in 1903. In the course of the next sixty years sixty-six inscriptions from twenty-one sites have become known. The script in which they are written is almost identical with the Maurya Brāhmī script as this is known from the Aśoka pillars found at Yerragudi, Brahmagiri and other sites in the south. The inscriptions support the evidence of the most ancient Tamil literature that the language has undergone comparatively few changes in the course of two thousand years.<sup>63</sup>

In the field of religion the evidence of the inscriptions is of special interest. They make it plain that at this early date both the Buddhist and the Jain faiths had penetrated South India. Our chief authority Dr S. Mahādevan writes: 'There is clear evidence in the inscriptions that the natural caverns with the rock-cut beds were occupied by monks as well as nuns of both the Buddhist and the Jain religions.'<sup>64</sup> The term *thavira* (Sanskrit *sthavira*) is used for a monk; and *amannan* (Sanskrit *śramana*) for a Jain ascetic.

When the Āryans reached the south, they found a strong pre-Āryan tradition in both language and culture. As to the pre-Āryan religion of the Dravidian peoples, few confident assertions can at present be made. The earliest existing Tamil literature belongs to a period later than that dealt with in this chapter, and archaeology has so far yielded little that is relevant. We may conjecture that the early Dravidians had gods many and lords many, and that they worshipped the powers of nature and of fertility. But language suggests that the idea of a single supreme deity was not absent from the Dravidic mind.

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What has been recorded so far has been based mainly on written records, many of them of the highest literary quality, and on religious manifestations as these are seen in architecture, statuary and painting. It has to be remembered that this is, in reality, only a small part of the picture. In India, the vast mass of the population still lives, from the religious point of view, on the level of what used to be called 'animism'.<sup>65</sup> Characteristic of religion on this level is belief in local and localised spirits, many of which are evil, malicious and harmful to man, and therefore have to be propitiated, often by the shedding of blood. Some spirits, however, are beneficent, though they may turn against their worshippers if their due claims to honour are not recognised. Belief in magic, both black and white, in witchcraft, and in the power of the evil eye, is almost universal. There is belief in survival after death, but in most cases in misty rather than in definite form. The idea of one supreme god is not wholly absent, but in most cases such a god is thought of as remote, and no worship is offered to him. Since many of the cults are local, and great variety obtains from district to district, generalisation is difficult.<sup>66</sup> And, since change and development belong to religion, in its simpler as well as in its more elaborate forms, it is impossible to infer with certainty from the present to the past, and to say that, because things are so today, they were so also three thousand years ago. But the study of artistic traditions, genuinely Indian and uninfluenced by forces from outside, does suggest a real continuity. The extraordinarily vivid sculptures which are to be found on village temples and shrines all over India, some of which appear to be ancient, suggest that some at least of the deities and spirits whom we encounter in the Indian village of today stand in a line of direct descent from ancestors who existed long before the beginning of the Christian era.<sup>67</sup>

The religious systems and movements of which mention has so far been made were of indigenous growth, if not of indigenous origin. The Āryans had come in as foreigners and invaders; but they had been in India so long that any sense of foreignness had long since worn off. The religion with which they entered India was in all probability closely related to the general religious traditions of the Āryan peoples;<sup>68</sup> but all the developments of the *Vedānta* and of later Hinduism took place on Indian soil, and are without close parallels in other parts of the Āryan world. Greek influences were present for a considerable period, but these were less profound than might have been expected, and such influences as there were can hardly be traced at all in the sphere of religion. The Indian religious scene is a scene of *Indian* religions. In the period which followed, India was to be exposed to religious, no less than to military and cultural, invasion. Islam and Christianity were to penetrate the Indian world, and to establish themselves as significant features of the common life of India. A small Zoroastrian community was

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also to find a home in India. All this happened after the beginning of the Christian era. But there may be one small exception to the general rule, and of this brief notice should be taken.

Small communities of Jews have certainly existed in India for a very long time. There are the Bene-Israel in and around Bombay, and the separated but related communities of the White and the Black Jews in Cochin in Kerala.

Various views are held as to the date at which Jews first arrived in India. Some, taking the loan words for apes and peacocks in the Hebrew Old Testament (1 Kings 15: 22, 2 Chronicles 9: 22) as Tamil in origin, have dreamed of an active commerce between the realm of King Solomon and South India, at about the time at which the hymns of the *Rg Veda* were being composed. There is no corroborative evidence.

The Indian scholar G.M. Moraes has put forward the view that the Bene-Israel must have come to India before the destruction of the Second Temple in Jerusalem. He adduces the fact that this Jewish community has retained the custom of animal sacrifice, which has been abandoned in the rest of the Jewish world ever since the destruction of Herod's temple by the Romans in AD 70.<sup>69</sup>

The Cochin Jews claim that their ancestors came to India shortly after the destruction of the Temple. This has been accepted by a number of writers; among whom Moraes mentions among other sources the report of Galetti and others on *The Dutch in Malabar* (Madras, 1911). There is nothing inherently improbable in this tradition; without doubt there was a wide dispersion of the Jews in the years following the great disaster of the Jewish war of AD 66-70. Mr Moraes elaborates a good deal further when he writes

St Thomas must also have come to Muziris [Cranganore] drawn by the existence of a well-established colony, for though the documents now in possession of the Jews do not go back to a remote antiquity, there is no reason why they should not be considered as having migrated to India along with the Yavanas [Greeks], if not earlier.<sup>70</sup>

This is to strain the evidence further than it will go. All that we can say is that the tapestry of India's religious life may have been enriched before the beginning of the Christian era by the presence of a number of Jews,<sup>71</sup> and of a religion very different in character from those of Indian origin.

If Christianity came to India, as some believe, in the first century AD, it was confronted by a wide range of religious beliefs and traditions. Hinduism was there in all of its many varieties, especially in the three major forms which have been outlined above. Jainism and Buddhism had expanded from the areas of their first foundation, until in some parts of India they threatened to

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undermine Hinduism completely. Beneath the religions with a great literary tradition there were the usages of the village folk, with many elements of terror and only a few of hope and consolation. In every confrontation of religions there will be elements of attraction and repulsion. The Christian, with his unvarying emphasis on the unity of God, could not but be repelled by what he understood as polytheism in all its forms. He could allow no place for magic, and for the cruelty which sometimes accompanies belief on that level. But, as he became aware of the preoccupation of the Hindu mind with the One and with the monotheism that seemed to be striving to come to birth, and still more as he became aware of the deep Hindu longing for fellowship with the unseen, of the yearning of the Buddhist for release, of the striving of the *bhakta* for oneness with the divine, he could not but be attracted, and feel the possibility of dialogue in place of denunciation.

But the history could not be simple. There were long periods of mutual misunderstanding, making anything more than a rather uneasy co-existence impossible. The natural tendency of the human mind to reject the strange and new made difficult any ready acceptance by India of the alien ideas of the Gospel. Indifference sometimes turned into hostility, hostility occasionally to active persecution. But the Christians held on; and willy-nilly the Indian faiths and the Christian faith were influenced and modified by one another. The story which follows is one of ups and downs, of constantly shifting lights and shadows, and not of victorious and triumphant Christian advance. But Christianity has maintained itself in India through the centuries, and has established its right to be regarded as one of the Indian faiths. It is this that makes imperative the attempt to see it at all times against the Indian background, and to interpret its history as that of an endless dialogue with the other forms of religious faith by which it has been surrounded.

## 2 · Christianity Comes to India

### I THE THOMAS TRADITION AND NORTH INDIA

And while he thus spake and thought, it chanced that there was there a certain merchant come from India whose name was Abbanes, sent from the King Gundaphorus, and having commandment from him to buy a carpenter and bring him unto him.

Now the Lord seeing him walking in the market-place at noon said unto him: Wouldest thou buy a carpenter? And he said to him: Yea. And the Lord said to him: I have a slave that is a carpenter and I desire to sell him. And so saying he showed him Thomas afar off, and agreed with him for three litrae of silver unstamped, and wrote a deed of sale, saying: I, Jesus, the son of Joseph the carpenter, acknowledge that I have sold my slave, Judas by name, unto thee Abbanes, a merchant of Gundaphorus, king of the Indians. And when the deed was finished, the Saviour took Judas Thomas and led him away to Abbanes the merchant; and when Abbanes saw him he said unto him: Is this thy master? And the apostle said: Yea, he is my Lord. And he said: I have bought thee of him. And the apostle held his peace.

The story of the coming of Christianity to India cannot start in any place other than the opening chapters of the *Acts of Thomas*.<sup>1</sup> This extensive and interesting work was almost certainly written in Syriac, perhaps in the third century after Christ. It exists also in Greek, in two late and considerably interpolated Latin versions, and in Armenian; some sections have been found also in Ethiopic. This variety of versions indicates the popularity of the work in ancient times. In its present form the *Acts* is a Gnostic work, and among other things may be described as a strong dissuasive against marriage.

The section that deals with the coming of Thomas to India reports that, when the apostles were together in Jerusalem and divided the world among them, the lot to go to India fell to Thomas, who in Syriac sources alone is called Judas Thomas. He refused, saying 'I am a Hebrew man; how can I go among the Indians and preach the truth?' Whereupon the Lord devised the plan described in the paragraph quoted above, and, in spite of his refusal,



## *The Thomas Tradition and North India*

Thomas finds himself constrained to go to India.

On arrival, he is brought before King Gundaphorus, and asked what crafts he understands. He replies: 'In wood: ploughs, yokes, goads, pulleys and boats and oars and masts; and in stone: pillars, temples, and court-houses for kings.' The apostle is accordingly commissioned to build a palace for the king; but, instead of doing so, distributes all that he receives as alms to the poor. When this is brought to light, the king is naturally dissatisfied by the apostle's affirmation: 'Thou canst not see [the palace] now, but when thou departest this life *then* thou shalt see it.' Thomas is thrown into gaol, but released when Gad the king's brother, who had died, is allowed to return to earth and report on the palace which he has seen in heaven (c. 22). So the story ends happily, with the liberation of Thomas and the baptism of the king and his brother.

Later in the work Thomas is found in the kingdom of Misdaeus (Syr. Mazdai), where his successful preaching of the way of sexual abstinence arouses the anger of the king. Misdaeus decides to put him to death: 'and when they had walked one mile, he delivered him unto four soldiers and an officer, and commanded them to take him into the mountain and there pierce him with spears and put an end to him, and return again to the city' (c. 164). So, when the apostle had prayed, 'he said unto the soldiers: Come hither and accomplish the commandments of him that sent you. And the four came and pierced him with their spears, and he fell down and died' (c. 168).

Students of early Christian writings had come to regard the *Acts of Thomas* as valuable evidence for the views of Christians in Mesopotamia in the third century, but to discount the possibility of there being any historical element in its highly romantic stories<sup>2</sup> – until King Gondopharnes emerged from the mists of fancy on to the clear stage of undeniable history.

The wizard who performed the remarkable feat of bringing Gondopharnes back to life was that most enigmatic of European adventurers on the north-west frontier of India, Charles Masson. Though this was the name under which he passed, and though he claimed to be an American citizen, Masson was almost certainly an Englishman, James Lewis (though this may also have been an assumed name), who somewhere about 1826 deserted from the Bengal European Artillery, but made himself so useful to the British as an agent in Afghanistan that in 1835 he was granted a royal pardon and was eventually able to return to England.<sup>3</sup> Masson was clearly a man of some education and of great though untrained ability. During an extended stay in the Kabul Valley he devoted himself to the study of antiquities, with the success of a pioneer in an almost untrodden field. In 1833 he began digging at Begram, the ancient Kāpisa, and brought back from it 1,565 copper coins and 14 of gold and silver.<sup>4</sup> Masson brought back to history a

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number of kings who were unknown or had been entirely forgotten. Among them was Vindapharna ('the winner of glory', Persian), the varieties in the form of whose name as written on the coins (Gūdnaphar in Syriac, Hindopheres in Greek) are due simply to the attempts to represent in various tongues a name derived from an unfamiliar language.

With the help of the coins alone it has been possible to reconstruct a good deal of the history of the 'king of India' of the *Acts of Thomas*. It is almost certain that Gondopharnes, who calls himself 'the Great King, Supreme King of Kings', came to the throne in AD 16 and was still reigning in AD 45, including in his dominions a part of what is now Iran, Afghanistan, and areas of north-western India. But by AD 78 the line of the Parthian kings had come to an end, having been supplanted by the people from Central Asia, the Yueh-chi, better known by their Indian name as the Kuṣāṇa rulers, the most notable of whom, Kaniṣka, appears to have reigned from AD 78 onwards.<sup>5</sup> We have no means of knowing how it came about that the name of Gondopharnes,<sup>6</sup> whose line and succession had wholly vanished from the earth, was still remembered in a Syriac-speaking country at least a century, and perhaps considerably more than a century, after his death. It appears that there had been more contact between north-west India and the countries now known as Iran and Iraq than had been generally supposed.

The historic coincidence is certainly remarkable; but it is important not to build on it a structure heavier than it will bear. A number of scholars, among whom are to be mentioned with respect Bishop A.E. Medlycott,<sup>7</sup> J.N. Farquhar<sup>8</sup> and the Jesuit J. Dahlmann<sup>9</sup> have built up on slender foundations what can only be called Thomas romances, such as reflect the vividness of their imaginations rather than the prudence of rigid historical critics. Fr Dahlmann himself has given us the warning: 'It might well be that some geographical and historical features – names of historical personalities, events the historical reality of which is undoubted, geographical indications which correspond to reality – might be woven into the web of the story, and in spite of this the tradition in itself might be entirely lacking in historical credibility.'<sup>10</sup>

Among the historical realities, the following may be recognised:

Just at the time in which the New Testament was taking shape, there existed a powerful Parthian kingdom in north-west India and some lands adjacent to it.

There is every reason to believe that this was a cosmopolitan kingdom, in which Greeks and Bactrians, Scythians and Indians and others rubbed shoulders with one another.

Taxilā (Takṣaśilā) was a great city in which there may have been a considerable amount of intellectual activity. We know from the Buddhist work *Milinda-pañha* that Buddhism, which had recently been introduced

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in this area but was making great strides, was a subject of living discussion.<sup>11</sup>

Almost certainly trade was active between the realm of Gondopharnes and the lands of Central Asia and of the Middle East, both across the mountain passes and from the Persian Gulf by sea to the mouth of the Indus.

It is probable that there would be communities of Mesopotamian merchants in the great cities of the area, and especially in the capital. The presence of Christians among them at an early date is possible, though there is no direct evidence to support the suggestion.

Such communities, if they existed, may well have been disrupted in the course of the disorders resulting in the replacement of the Parthian by the Kuṣāṇa rulers. Persian Christian merchants, returning to their homeland, may have carried with them recollections of the time that they had spent in India, and the name of the king under whom they had lived.

The presence of Christians in cities at or near the mouth of the Indus cannot be regarded as unlikely. Traffic between the Persian Gulf and that area has always been active. If Christian merchants had come from Persia and settled in that area, they would almost certainly bring with them the Thomas tradition.

It is impossible to show any continuity between such communities and the scattered groups of Nestorians found in various parts of India in later times; but the existence of such groups does suggest a quiet penetration of India by Christians from the Middle East over many years.

Early Christian communities, if they ever existed, may have been gradually eliminated, as the Arabs took complete possession of the Indian seas.

Bishop Medlycott has collected many references to Thomas and India from Syriac breviaries, hymns and other liturgical sources. One striking example may be quoted by way of illustration; in one of the hymns of Ephrem, who died in AD 373, we read:

Lo, in India are thy miracles, O Thomas,  
and in our land thy triumph,  
and everywhere thy festival . . .  
The sunburnt India thou has made fair . . .  
a tainted land of dark people thou hast purified.  
More than snow and white linen  
the dark bride of India thou hast made fair . . .  
the crown of light has obliterated India's darkened shades.<sup>12</sup>

This confirms what we know already from the *Acts of Thomas* – that from the middle of the third century there was a strong tradition in Edessa linking

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India with the work of the apostle Thomas. But we are no nearer identifying the part of India which Thomas is supposed to have visited. If there were Christian communities of Persian origin in the Indus region, they may well have laid claim to a share in the Thomas tradition, and so followed the example of many other churches in trying to establish for their own church links with an apostolic origin.

There are a few indications in other sources of a connection between the Thomas story and the presence of Christians in north-western India.

Too much stress must not be laid on Bishop John, who at the council of Nicaea signed himself as 'bishop of the Great India and Persia'. Some have supposed this solitary Persian at an assembly of Greek bishops<sup>13</sup> to be no more than an invention, intended perhaps to convey the truly ecumenical character of the great gathering. It is not, however, necessary to carry scepticism quite so far. Eusebius of Caesarea, who was present at the council, says expressly that 'a certain bishop from Persia took part in the synod'.<sup>14</sup> But the interpretation of the brief notice is not easy. We are not told of what See John was bishop. It is, of course possible that there were Christians in India at the time of the council of Nicaea. If so, it seems probable that they were Persian or Mesopotamian merchants resident in India for the purpose of trade rather than Christians of Indian ethnic origin. In that case, they would naturally come under the jurisdiction of a Persian prelate.<sup>15</sup> To assume the existence of flourishing Indian churches with bishops and clergy from among their own people goes beyond the evidence that we have.

## 2 THE THOMAS TRADITION AND SOUTH INDIA

Some of the available evidence points to the presence of Christians in north-west India, or in neighbouring territories which do not form part of India or Pakistan as these are defined today. A different tradition associates the apostle Thomas not with north India but with the south; those who call themselves by the honourable name of the Thomas Christians were till recently found exclusively in the south-western region known as Kerala.

If the apostle Thomas, one of the twelve apostles of Jesus of Nazareth, had wished to take ship and go to India, there was nothing to prevent his doing so. Ample evidence exists to show the range and vigour of the commerce between India and the western world in the first two centuries of our era.

The history of this commerce reaches back into a far distant past. But a new period opened when Greek navigators became aware of the two monsoons, and of the practicability of journeys to India far more rapid than those of earlier days.

### *The Thomas Tradition and South India*

Tradition has identified one Hippalus as the first mariner bold enough to set his tiller and his sails, and to sally forth into the open waters of the Arabian sea. Since the monsoon wind came to be called the 'Hippalus wind', it is possible that Hippalus is the name not so much of an identifiable individual as of an 'ancient mariner'.<sup>16</sup> The date at which the discovery was made is of some historical importance. A date in the reign of Claudius (AD 41-58) has been assigned to the discovery by a number of scholars; but there is reason to think that the process started a good deal earlier than this, perhaps even before the beginning of the Christian era. The working out of the direct route took place in stages. Those who first abandoned the tedious coast-route sailed across from the south coast of Arabia to Patala at the mouth of the Indus. At a later stage the voyage was shortened by taking a route which led to the Indian coast at or in the neighbourhood of Barygāza (Broach). Finally the mariners discovered that, leaving the Red Sea in July, 'they could by throwing the ship's head off the wind with a constant pull of the rudder and a shift of the yard (thus sailing in an arc of a circle) go across to Malabar marts in forty days'.<sup>17</sup>

That these calculations are not far from the mark is made evident by the discoveries of Roman coins, all of gold and silver, which have been going on in South India for just two centuries (the first was made in 1775). The most notable feature in these hoards, some of them very large, is that among the coins those of the reigns of Augustus and Tiberius predominate. Those from a period after the reign of Nero are much less numerous. This brings the high point of Roman commerce with India precisely into that period in which we are specially interested, the first sixty years of the first century AD.

Further confirmation has been afforded by the discovery in 1945 of a Roman commercial settlement at Arikkamedu in the neighbourhood of Pondichéri. Fragments of pottery of the Arretine ware from Italy make it possible to date the settlement in the early years of the first century.<sup>18</sup> Sir Mortimer Wheeler, the first excavator, is able to state confidently that

the Hippalus may now be assumed therefore to have been in full and undisguised use at the end of the reign of Augustus (died AD 14); and coincidentally the assumption gives a new actuality to the statement of Strabo, writing under Augustus, that from the Egyptian port of Myos Hormos alone 120 ships left for the East every year.<sup>19</sup>

In one other respect the discovery is important. The presence of a Roman settlement on the east coast of India shows clearly that the Western merchants of those days had discovered the existence of the Pālgḥāt gap.<sup>20</sup> The mountains of India run almost as far as its southern tip, ending in the magnificent cliff known as the Nose of Comorin, not much less than 6,000

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feet (1,830 m) in height and a landmark for sailors far out to sea. But at one point, a hundred and twenty miles to the north, the mountain chain is broken by a gap in which the land does not rise above 1,200 feet. In modern times this is naturally the route followed by both railway and high road from west to east. A map showing the places at which Roman coins have been discovered (such as that given by Mortimer Wheeler in fig. 16, p. 130), makes it evident at a glance that in Roman times this was a great trade route, and that one of the points at which that trade route would debouch on the Bay of Bengal would be precisely Arikamedu.

Our main source of information for the voyage from the Roman world to India is the *Periplus Maris Erythraei*, the *Circumnavigation of the Red Sea*, a work written apparently in the last quarter of the first century AD.<sup>21</sup> It is clearly based on personal knowledge, and is full and accurate as far as Cape Comorin; for the further reaches of India and for what lies beyond, the writer's information is scrappy, and depends on what he has heard from others rather than on what he has seen himself. This strengthens the view that, once the Pālghāt gap was known to exist, mariners from the West avoided the long and dangerous route round Ceylon,<sup>22</sup> just as the Greek sailor preferred the isthmus of Corinth to the stormy seas of Cape Matapan, and carried on one important stage of his commerce by land. The Western trader in India lived in almost total ignorance of Ceylon. The *Periplus* is very much a mariner's handbook. It gives only such information as is likely to be of value and interest to sailors and merchants. It tells us little of the manners and customs of the peoples of India in that period, and the subject of religion is not even so much as mentioned.

The *Periplus* indicates that the regular landfall for sailors coming with the Hippalus wind was Muziris. This has been identified, almost certainly, with Cranganore (Malayālam: Koṭuñalḷūr), today through the shifting of the coastline only an insignificant village but for centuries one of the great ports of southern India and a place of considerable importance in the Christian history of Kerala. A name which constantly appears in the later sources is Quilon (Malayālam: Kollam), and this is even at the present day a port of some importance. The Greek and Roman mariners, after their voyage from Myos Hormos with the monsoon, would probably arrive in Indian waters about the end of August. Having done their business in three months or so, they would return with the other monsoon in November and December, thus completing the round trip in six months or a little more. They would carry with them merchandise of many kinds, but above all spices and pearls, and would leave behind them vast quantities of the precious metals, of which only a small part has so far been revealed by the spade of the archaeologist.

This is the world into which it is alleged that the apostle Thomas penetrated.<sup>23</sup>

None of the written accounts concerning the mission of Thomas which have been preserved in India is ancient. It would not, however, be wise to sweep them all away as having no historical value. Oral traditions linger long in the East. In all the Syriac sources relating to the early history of the Thomas Christians and to the coming of Thomas to India, certain features constantly recur, and through all the differences a common pattern appears.

A Syriac manuscript of the year 1770 may serve as a starting point for inquiry.<sup>24</sup>

Here it is reported that Thomas went first to Mylapore (Mayilāpuri), a place on the Coromandel Coast just south of Madras. Then he passed to the hill country of Chērākōn.<sup>25</sup> At that time there was no king, but there were thirty-two *grāmas* (village communities) and thirty-two chieftains held sway.<sup>26</sup> There many believed and were baptised. In each of the two *grāmas*, Sānkarapuri and Pakalomaṛṛam,<sup>27</sup> the apostle appointed one priest. And setting forth again he preached the Way, and he built there seven churches – Kōtta-Kāyalil, Gōkamangalam, Niranam, Chayil, Kurakēni, Quilon and Palūr.

After this he itinerated in Malabar for thirty years; and, having gone again to preach the Gospel in the Pāṇḍi (Tamil) country, on the way as he went an Embran (Brāhman) casting a dart smote him, and he was buried in the little mount of Mylapore. And angels carried him to Urāha (Edessa).

The number of seven churches constantly recurs, though there are variations in the names. G. Milne Rae gives the list as Cranganore, Quilon, Palūr, Parur, Pallipuram or Kokamangalam, Niraṇam, Nellakkal also called Chael or Shail.<sup>28</sup> A. Mingana translates a letter written in Syriac by Mar Thomas the bishop of Malabar in 1721 to the Dutch scholar Charles Schaaf of Leiden.<sup>29</sup> Here the list appears in another form – Mailapo, Corignalore, Parakar, Irapalli, Kokamaglam, Niraṇam and Tiribancore.<sup>30</sup>

Thomas the apostle is represented in this source as having spent the greater part of his time in India in Kerala and there to have had great success in his mission. Of the seven churches he is said to have founded, all with one exception are to be found not far from the coast and in the areas in which to this day Christians form a large part of the population.<sup>31</sup> On the other hand, none of the traditions speaks of his having suffered martyrdom in Kerala. This is everywhere reported as having taken place in the Pāṇḍiyan country, that is on the Coromandel or eastern coast of India, and the name of Mylapore, the city of peacocks, constantly recurs in the story. The assassination of the apostle is invariably ascribed to a Brāhman or Brāhmans. European travellers who managed to reach India before the opening of the sea-way by Vasco de Gama in 1498 report the presence of Nestorian Christians in the neighbourhood of Mylapore. Thus Marco Polo, who was there in 1293, asserts without hesitation that 'the Body of Messer

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St Thomas the Apostle lies in the province of Maabar at a certain little town having no great population . . . Both Christians and Saracens also do hold the Saint in great reverence.’<sup>32</sup> The state of the case at a later date was summed up by Paulinus da San Bartolomeo (John Philip Wesdin), who writes: ‘All the Christians of the East, Catholics and heretics like the Nestorians, Jacobites, Armenians, the Catholics of Bengal, Pegu, Siam, Ceylon, Malabar and Hindustan, come to make their devotions, and this alone is sufficient to confirm the ancient and universal tradition that St Thomas died at Mylapore.’<sup>33</sup>

### 3 THE PORTUGUESE TAKE A HAND

When the Portuguese arrived in India, they found the Thomas tradition widely accepted, and were shown the church at Mylapore in which it was held that the apostle had been buried in a chapel on the gospel side;<sup>34</sup> it was affirmed that in a corresponding chapel on the epistle side was a grave of a Christian king named Thomas Mudaliyar.<sup>35</sup> The church was in a ruinous condition, but the choir with a dome above it was still standing. This first report dates from 1517.

In 1523 it was feared that the dome might collapse, and it was decided that the grave of the apostle, which formed part of the foundation of the dome, must be excavated. This was duly carried out on a Saturday and Sunday in July 1523.<sup>36</sup> The investigators first found loose earth to a depth of three spans; the four walls (of the grave) had been built up with bricks and whitewashed.<sup>37</sup> When this had been removed, they came upon a layer of bricks and mortar two spans thick, then upon a further depth of loose earth three spans thick, then on a second layer of bricks and mortar like the first. Here they were inclined to stop the work, thinking that they had reached the bottom of the grave. But Diogo Fernandes urged his companions to go deeper yet. So they broke through the brick covering and found underneath it three spans of earth, and under that a layer of cement two spans thick, so hard that they had difficulty in breaking it up with their iron crowbars. When they had removed the cement, they found two slabs of stone bound together and without any inscription, which covered the entire space. These were removed, and then a further layer of loose earth was revealed. (Here the work of Saturday ceased; but next morning, Sunday, all came again to the work.) At this point the brick lining of the walls came to an end. Then three or four more spans of earth were removed, and they had reached a depth of 15/16 spans.<sup>38</sup> Here they found a bed of sand, and of lime which had crumbled into dust. Then they came at once upon bones – of a skull, then of ribs, then parts of a whole body. They found also an earthenware jar, which could hold an *almude* (16.54 litres), full of earth, at the foot of the



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grave. A thigh bone was sticking out from it; and inside it was the blade of a 'Malabaric' lance or spear in the shape of an olive-leaf (text B), perfectly preserved, and in the shaft part of a piece of wood.

They took all the fragments of bone, which were very much decayed, and the Rev. Fathers placed them in a chest, which they did not fill. The bones together made up far less than a complete human skeleton. These bones, and others found in the course of the excavations, were carefully placed in a Chinese chest, which had two silver locks.

The original simple story of the martyrdom came gradually to be encrusted with all manner of legends. There are two hills at Mylapore. All tradition points to the smaller hill as the scene of the martyrdom. But, when in 1547 an ancient cross was discovered on the larger hill rather more than a mile away from the smaller, the two hills were combined in the tradition, in the form that the apostle was wounded to death on the smaller hill but managed to escape to the larger hill and died there. Marco Polo records a strange story which he had heard when he visited Mylapore:

The Saint was in the wood outside his hermitage saying his prayers; and round about him were many peacocks, for these are more plentiful in that country than anywhere else. And one of the idolaters of that country, being of the lineage of those called Govi that I told you of,<sup>39</sup> having gone with his bow and arrows to shoot peafowl, not seeing the Saint, let fly an arrow at one of the peacocks; and this arrow struck the holy man in the right side, insomuch that he died of the wound, sweetly addressing himself to his Creator.<sup>40</sup>

A yet more bizarre version reports that a hunter, seeing a number of peacockes, aimed at a specially handsome bird and pierced it with an arrow: 'All the birds rose up, but the wounded one turned into a man and fell down to the ground. When the body was examined, it was found to be that of St Thomas. Impressions of human feet were also found in the slab from which the bird had risen when wounded.'<sup>41</sup>

To discern what measure of truth underlies this curious collection of legends is no easy task.

It is certain that the Portuguese excavated a tomb, that all the evidence suggests that this was a genuinely ancient tomb of a rather unusually elaborate kind, and that in the tomb they found human bones in an advanced state of decay. But whether these were Christian bones, and if so, who was the Christian whose bones they were, there is no evidence of any kind to show.

Some would sweep away the evidence of the tomb as affording no ground for certainty of any kind. A Jesuit historian of considerable experience in India, Fr H. Heras SJ, writes: 'Some early Portuguese writers have kept the details of the original account, and these details are quite enough for disclosing the untruthfulness of the discovery.'<sup>42</sup>

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An Indian scholar, T.K. Thomas, has gone even further. Pointing out that the tomb excavated by the Portuguese lay north–south, according to Muslim custom, and not east–west, as in the Christian tradition, he maintains that the grave was that of a Muslim holy man, and that the Muslims who venerated the tomb were right in thinking that they were reverencing one of their own, a Saracen holy man who came from Nubia.<sup>43</sup>

Few would perhaps go so far in a negative direction. A mediating position is well expressed by Bishop L.W. Brown:

We cannot prove that the Apostle worked in south India any more than we can disprove that fact; but the presence of Christians of undoubtedly ancient origin holding firmly to the tradition [and other favourable factors] may for some incline the balance to belief that the truth of the tradition is a reasonable probability. The evidence we have cannot do more than this.<sup>44</sup>

### 4 EVIDENCES LITERARY AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL

If we turn from the world of tradition and legend to that of written history and of archaeology, and ask at which point the existence of an ancient Church in India can be established by these more solid evidences, the answer cannot be in any doubt; the earliest evidence which can be regarded as fully convincing is to be found in the *Christian Topography* of Cosmas Indicopleustes, a Greek writer of the sixth century AD.<sup>45</sup>

‘Cosmas’, to give him the name by which he has come to be generally known, was a merchant, a man of not very extensive education, a Nestorian living in that home of orthodoxy Alexandria, who in the years AD 547–9 gave expression to his rather unusual views of cosmography and of the nature of the universe in a work called *Christian Topography*.

In spite of the name by which he has come to be known, it is almost certain that Cosmas had never visited India<sup>46</sup> and that he was dependent for his information on what he had heard from others. He had travelled widely, but of a voyage to India he gives not a single piece of evidence. This explains why he has so little to say, and that little so vague and unsatisfactory.

In the whole work only two passages come under consideration.

In III.64, where he is dealing with the fulfilment of prophecy, Cosmas writes with enthusiasm of the progress of the Gospel and of the expansion of the church throughout the world:

The church, far from being destroyed, is multiplying, and in the same way the whole world has been filled and continues to be filled with the doctrine of Christ the Master, and the Gospel is being proclaimed in the whole world . . . Even in the Island of Taprobane in inner India, where also the Indian sea is, there is a church of Christians, clergy and believers. I do not know whether there are Christians even beyond Taprobane. The same is true in the place called Male, where the pepper

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grows, and in the place called Kaliana, and there is a bishop appointed [lit. 'consecrated'] from Persia. The same is true of the island called Dioscorides [Socotra] in the same Indian sea.

Book XI, chap. 13 is called 'Concerning the island of Taprobane':

This is the great island in the ocean situated in the Indian sea. By the Indians it is called Sielendipa, among the Greeks Taprobane. There the jacinth stone is found. It lies beyond the country where the pepper grows . . .

This same island has a church of Persian Christians who are resident<sup>47</sup> in that country, and a priest sent [lit. 'ordained'] from Persia, and a deacon, and all that is requisite for the conduct of the worship of the Church. But the natives and their kings are heathens.<sup>48</sup>

The first problem that confronts the inquirer is that of geographical identification. Male appears to conceal the name Malabar. No other area in the ancient world was so closely associated with the production of pepper and with the spice trade. Kaliana may well be Quilon, that port town on the coast of Kerala which appears in so many of our sources and in such a diversity of forms.<sup>49</sup> But what and where is Taprobane? The name, and the identification of this island with Ceylon, go back at least as far as Megasthenes (300 BC). But the evidence must be regarded as very dubious. The ancients show themselves astonishingly ignorant of the exact location of the island, and make ludicrous guesses as to its extent and its size. Apart from this one passage of Cosmas, there is no reference to Christians in Ceylon; if they had existed earlier, they must have died out before the period at which information about the island becomes more plentiful. In no eastern source is the name Taprobane given to Ceylon. Cosmas himself shows that he knows the correct name Sielendīpa. In the second half of this word there is no difficulty in recognising the Sanskrit *dvīpa*, island.<sup>50</sup> The first half is near enough to the Zeilon or Ceylon, by which later Western writers regularly refer to the island.

There is, however, one strong candidate for identification with Taprobane. The last of the great rivers of South India, the Tāmraparṇī, never goes completely dry even in the most burning of hot seasons, and is therefore held sacred by the inhabitants. At its mouth were the great trading centres of Korkai (the 'Kolchoi' of the Greeks) and Kāyal. The Greeks and Romans had only vague information as to anything which lay beyond Cape Comorin. But if traders, avoiding the long and stormy voyage round Ceylon, had taken the land-route and established themselves at Arikkamedu, not many years would pass before they would become aware of these southern ports. If there were groups of Christian merchants in other seaport towns, why not also in those of the Tāmraparṇī estuary? Word of such groups might have penetrated westwards, and they might have been wrongly

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located in Ceylon owing to the false identification of Taprobane made by the Greek and Roman writers long before.<sup>51</sup>

The two passages of Cosmas continue to stress one of the most remarkable features in the life of the church of the Thomas Christians of South India. Through the centuries this church has never managed to become either wholly independent or wholly indigenous. Until comparatively recent times its metropolitan was always a foreigner sent by the patriarch of Babylon (later, of Antioch). Through the centuries it retained Syriac as its liturgical language, and never translated, in written form, into Malayalam, the language understood of the people, even so much as the liturgical Gospels. Dr Percival Spear has given what is probably the correct explanation for this strange phenomenon – these were measures of self-protection. A small Christian community surrounded by masses of Hindus would be in constant danger of inanition by assimilation. Contact with a foreign country and the use of a foreign language would be elements of distinctiveness very useful in such a situation, just as the continued use of the Welsh language has done much to preserve the distinctiveness of the remarkable community of Welsh farmers in Patagonia.

Some questions still remain to be answered. Cosmas depicts for us a church of foreigners, merchants who had come to India on their business just as he himself had travelled on his affairs, and some of whom had settled down without thereby losing their national identity. When the Portuguese discovered the ancient church at the beginning of the sixteenth century, it was clearly an Indian church, though not without memories, and some evidences, of origins elsewhere. When did the change from foreign community to indigenous church take place? Was the Indian church in its origins purely a body of foreign traders? Was Garbe right in attributing the presence of Christians in India to violent persecutions in their homeland of Persia?<sup>52</sup> Or were there, as recorded in the Thomas legends, strong indigenous elements among Christians in India from the very beginning?

The answer to this question must be sought in the story of the relations between India and the West in the first five centuries of the Christian era.

It is possible that Christian interest in India has left its imprint even in the text of the New Testament. In Acts 2: 9–11 the author provides a list of the many peoples represented in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost. Between the eastern peoples and those of Asia Minor we find sandwiched 'Judaea', an inappropriate name, since that was precisely the country in which they were all standing. That the inappropriateness was early felt is shewn by a diversity of readings. Tertullian read 'Armenia' and Jerome 'Syria'. But in the works of Chrysostom we find 'India'. This interesting reading has not been found in any manuscript of the Greek New Testament. In the absence

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of direct confirmation of this kind, prudence suggests that it should be taken as evidence of an awareness of India in the mind of the great preacher of fourth-century Antioch rather than as a witness from the apostolic age of the church.<sup>53</sup>

The same must be said of another passage in the writings of the same Father. In his *Homily on John 2: 2* he tells us that 'Syrians and Egyptians and *Indians* and Persians and Ethiopians and thousands of other races have translated the teachings that have been received from him into their own languages, and so men of barbarian speech have learned to be lovers of wisdom.'<sup>54</sup> No fragment of any Indian translation of scripture has been preserved from so early a date; Garbe is undoubtedly right when he says that 'this is not historical evidence, but an unconsidered rhetorical expression'.<sup>55</sup>

If one city of the ancient world rather than another is to be selected as a point of contact between West and East, the palm must undoubtedly be assigned to Alexandria, that great cosmopolitan city of trade and commerce, of scholarship and later of Christian controversy.

An amusing light is cast on the possibilities of contact between Alexandria and India by a papyrus of the second century found at Oxyrhynchus in Egypt,<sup>56</sup> on one side of the which are to be found considerable sections of a farce written probably in the late Hellenistic age. The lady Charition has suffered shipwreck, and finds herself in the hands of barbarians. That these are Indians is made clear by a reference to the Indian sea (l. 215), and also by the king, who speaks quite good Greek as well as some unintelligible jargon, when he addresses his companions as 'Indian chiefs' (l. 90). Various attempts have been made to identify the unknown tongue. G.A. Grierson thought that in *ὄμβρετι* (*oumbreti*) could be recognised the Sanskrit *amṛta*, nectar, and this suits the context remarkably well, since the aim of the shipwrecked Greeks is to effect their escape by making the simple Indians drunk: 'wine is not for sale in these parts' (l. 52). But Professor E. Hultsch has given reasons for thinking that the language is old Kanarese, a not unreasonable suggestion.<sup>57</sup>

We know from an oration of Dio Chrysostom (AD 40-115) that there were Indians in Alexandria in the time of Trajan, but not in large numbers.<sup>58</sup> In a later oration Dio makes uncomplimentary remarks about Indians; but he is referring not to Indians in Alexandria but to the coastal peoples encountered by Greeks who had made the voyage to India; these peoples did not enjoy a good reputation even among Indians of better social standing. His words afford no evidence as to the social status of Indians in Egypt.

When we look for evidence of Christian, as distinct from general contacts between East and West, we shall naturally turn again to Alexandria.

## *Christianity Comes to India*

Not surprisingly it is from Alexandria that one valuable piece of evidence relating to the second century comes down to us. Eusebius of Caesarea tells us that Pantaenus, predecessor of the more famous Clement as head of the catechetical school at Alexandria (c. AD 179),

penetrated even as far as the land of the Indians. He there found his arrival anticipated by the Gospel of Matthew in the hands of some of the local inhabitants who had come to know Christ. It was said that Bartholomew, one of the apostles of Christ, had preached to them, and had left to them the writing of Matthew in Hebrew letters, and that this had been preserved among them till the time of which we speak.

Pantaenus, having carried out many reforms, after his return served as head of the Alexandrian school, commenting on the treasures of divine doctrine, both orally and in his writings.<sup>59</sup>

This note of Eusebius gives rise to a number of questions, which have been answered diversely by scholars.

First, where did Pantaenus go? Some, supposing it unlikely that Pantaenus would have gone so far from home, have opined that he went to Arabia Felix. But there is little to be said in favour of this view. When ships in hundreds were going from Egypt to South India, it is unlikely that anyone in Alexandria would be the victim of such a confusion. A fifth century work, the *Passion of Bartholomew*, tells us that three Indias were known to the Greeks – one near to Ethiopia, that is South India; one nearer to the Medes, that is the Indus delta and the adjoining lands; and one at the end of the world, that is ‘farther India’, which as we are told by Ptolemy (1:14) was discovered by a merchant named Alexander, and is the most easterly of the inhabited lands, beyond it there being nothing but the outermost ocean. It must be taken as probable that South India is the India of Pantaenus.

Even so, it is hardly the case that Pantaenus can be reckoned as among the ‘apostles of India’.<sup>60</sup> It seems clear that he went at the request of the Christians in India who had heard of the fame of his learning. He went not to make Christians but to find them. In this there is nothing unlikely; many of the early Christians were small traders, and in those days travel was rapid and easy. If Christians who had stayed in India and had become isolated from their base felt the need of fellowship and teaching, Alexandria would be the place to which they would most naturally look, especially if that had been the original home of some of them.

The reference to Bartholomew is perplexing. The name of this apostle does not occur in any other early source relating to India, and in legend he is usually associated with Armenia. Nor is the Gospel of Matthew in Hebrew letters easy to interpret. It has been suggested that this has its source in some tradition recording the presence of strong communities of Jews in the area, presumably Kerala, visited by the preacher.

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Not all problems can be solved; but the balance of probability seems to be on the side of the presence of Christians, though probably not of Indian Christians, in India in the second century, and of a visit from a well-known scholar resident in Egypt. There is no mention of Thomas in this tradition.

Not much time need be spent on the view that the earliest 'Christians' in India were in fact Manicheans. This view was put forward a hundred years ago by the distinguished orientalist A.C. Burnell, on the basis of rather flimsy evidence.<sup>61</sup> Manicheism was from the start a missionary religion. There may have been Manicheans in India at an early date; but such evidence as there is would not justify any more positive statement; and there is no evidence for the existence of Manichean communities in later times.

A faint ray of light reaches us from the end of the third century in a Syriac document translated by Mingana. This tells us that 'during the patriarchate of Shaḥlūpha and Pāpa (AD 293-300), Dudi (David) bishop of Basra (Charax) left his see and went to India, where he evangelized many people'.<sup>62</sup>

The region in India visited by this bishop cannot be determined with certainty, but some conjecture is possible. Before the end of the third century the Parthians and the Arabs emerged on the Red Sea; travel became dangerous, and communication between Egypt and India was much reduced. If a bishop from the Persian Gulf visited Indian communities *in the Indus region*, the fact would not be so remarkable as to deserve special mention in a chronicle. But if the Persian churches, learning of the destitution of the churches *in South India*, decided to send an emissary to their help, this would indeed indicate a new departure, which could have great significance for the future, and which therefore might be thought worthy of record.

Of the next recorded visitor to India, this time not from an Eastern church but from the very centre of the Roman world, a rather clearer picture can be given. Theophilus the Indian was a native of Socotra (though some think rather of the Maldivé Islands). We are told that about the year 354 the emperor Constantius, whose confidant he was, sent him on a mission first to Arabia and then to India. Unfortunately, we are dependent for information concerning this mission on the Arian Philostorgius, (3: 5), whose history of the Church from AD 313 to 425 was described, perhaps less than charitably, by the patriarch Photius as 'not so much a history as an encomium on the Arians and a vilification of the orthodox'.<sup>63</sup> Theophilus on arriving in India,

reformed many things which were not rightly done among them; for they listened to the reading of the Gospel in a sitting position, and did other things which were repugnant to the divine law. So, having reformed everything according to the holy usage as was most acceptable to God, he approved the doctrine of that church. But in doctrine he found that they were in no need of correction, since from the beginning they had confessed the Son to be of another substance than the Father.

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The circumstantial reference to a detail of liturgical usage sounds as though it was derived from actual observation; it is just the kind of divergent practice that might well grow up in a small and isolated church, though standing for the Gospel seems to have been one of the earliest and most widely observed elements in the liturgical order of the churches. When it comes to the question of doctrine, we are on less certain ground. Is it likely that the earliest Christians in South India were ever Arians? No other text suggests this. But if some of these Christians did come originally from Alexandria, it is possible that what later developed as Arian doctrine had begun to affect their point of view.

The story of the strengthening of the Indian Church by the coming of Thomas of Cana (or rather *Knāyil*, the merchant) with a large number of immigrants from Jerusalem, Baghdad and Nineveh seems still to dwell in the uncertain land between history and fiction. The tale is told in a great many forms, and all existing accounts are of comparatively recent origin. One account, recorded by W.J. Richards,<sup>64</sup> runs as follows:

The godly merchant Thomas of Jerusalem was sent to Malabar to investigate the state of the churches there. On his return he reported that they were in a depressed state through the lack of clergy. Not long after, the patriarch sent Joseph the bishop of Urāha (Edessa) with the honoured merchant, and together with him several priests and deacons, and many men, women and children; and they all landed safe at Malabar in the year of our Lord 345. Knāyil Thomas paid a visit to Cherumān Perumāl, king of Malabar, and was favourably received by him, being granted the 72 marks of distinction enjoyed by Brahmans and others of high caste. Moreover they received a grant of land at Kodungalur [Cranganore], and a stake was placed to mark the site for a church.

A different form of the tradition, recorded by Mingana,<sup>65</sup> adds that 'he invested them also with royal honours inscribed on pieces of copper, which are preserved with us down to the present day'. Copper-plates of a rather later period are in the possession of the Thomas Christians; but nothing has survived from the date to which the arrival of Thomas of Cana is assigned.

Some radical critics would deny to the story any historical basis. They hold that it came into existence simply through a chronological error of nearly five centuries, and by confusion with a later band of immigrants whose coming can be dated with some probability in the first half of the ninth century.

Such radical surgery is not needed. The supposed date of the arrival of Thomas of Cana and his companions coincides with the reign of the Sassanian king, Sapor III, during which persecution of Christians was particularly violent. There are precedents and parallels for emigration in such circumstances. Some have concluded that these refugees were the first Christians in Kerala. But this is not a necessary supposition. We may reckon



with at least the possibility that there were in Kerala Christians of earlier settlements, perhaps still belonging to the Bartholomew tradition. If Thomas of Cana had heard of the existence of these churches, this might be a powerful factor in directing his steps to that region of India. What is certain is that any emigrants from the Mesopotamian regions would have brought with them the Thomas tradition, and the proud assertion of the apostolic origin of their church; if they found that the local Christians were ignorant of this tradition, they would have imparted it to them, and so shared with them the conviction of apostolic origin.

In the fourth century the Christian community in Malabar may have been strengthened by a considerable body of immigrants from Persia or Mesopotamia. Somewhat obscure traditions give a hint of similar strengthening through the coming in of Christians from the Coromandel coast.

The tradition has been handed down in at least two forms.

One states that in the year AD 293 there was a great persecution of Christians in the Coḷa country. This caused the Christians to flee; seventy-two families reached Quilon in safety, and were successfully incorporated into the existing Christian community. It is remarkable that the Malayālam documents in which this story is preserved gives the name of the place from which they came as Kāvēri-pūm-paṭṭanam, the form of the name of this great port town, otherwise known as Puhār, which occurs frequently in the ancient Tamil romances but is rarely found in later sources; and that the believers are specifically identified as belonging to the Vellāḷa community, the great landholding and agricultural caste of the Tamil country which is generally ranked second after the Brāhmans.<sup>66</sup>

The other story is linked to Mylapore and the preaching of St Thomas. Here also the believers are Vellāḷas, traders in gold, silver and precious stones. Sixty-four families accepted the faith. When the local king ordered them to recant and threatened them with death, they fled by night and made their way to Tiruvankōṭ in Kerala. There the king treated them kindly, and gave them land for their houses and for a church.

So far the traditions bear some marks of historical truth. Then follows an addition which lacks all credibility. It is said that a generation later the well-known sorcerer Māṇickavāḷagar arrived among them to subvert their faith, and was so successful that a number of Christians learned Hindu ways and reverted to their old faith. This is clearly absurd. Māṇickavāḷagar was one of the greatest of Tamil poets. But he belonged to a period considerably later than that referred to in the tradition, perhaps as late as the tenth century; and to describe him as a sorcerer must have required a considerable effort of the imagination. Clearly this expansion of the tradition is aetiological. This

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immigrant community was known as the Maṇigrāmmakkār. When the true meaning of the term, as a community of tradesmen, was forgotten, the similarity of sound suggested the insertion of the name of one of the most famous of Tamil saints.<sup>67</sup> But this legend does seem to contain a kernel of historical truth. This immigrant community became divided, one section remaining faithful to its Christian tradition, the other gradually seeking re-incorporation into the Hindu community and acceptance as Nāyars, the high-caste community which most closely corresponds to the Vellālas of the Tamil country. In the census of 1837 they claimed to be Nāyars.<sup>68</sup> This claim seems to be now accepted; intermarriage with the Nāyars is permitted, and their separation from the Christian community is complete. Those who adhered to the Christian tradition seem in recent times to have achieved complete incorporation into the Jacobite section of the ancient church.<sup>69</sup>

From the seventh century we have a faint gleam of light in a letter from the Nestorian patriarch Isho 'Yahb III (650–60) to Simeon, metropolitan of Riwardeshir.<sup>70</sup> The patriarch complains:

As far as your district is concerned, from the time you showed recalcitrance against ecclesiastical canons, the episcopal succession has been interrupted in India, and this country has since sat in darkness, far from the light of divine teaching by means of rightful bishops: not only India that extends from the borders of the Persian empire, to the country which is called Kaleh, which is a distance of one thousand and two hundred parasangs, but even your own Fars.

The identification of Kaleh causes difficulty. A strong case can be made out for Quilon, the name present in so many other sources. If this can be sustained, it confirms the statement made by Cosmas that the Christians in South India and Ceylon (if Taprobane is in fact Ceylon) were governed by a bishop sent from Mesopotamia – except when the far-away authorities had so far forgotten their duties as to interrupt the episcopal succession.<sup>71</sup>

Two hundred years later a faint flicker of what can hardly be called light comes from an even more distant land. The *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* reports under the year 883 that 'in the same year Sighelm and Aethelstan conveyed to Rome the alms that the king had vowed to send thither, and also to India to St Thomas and St Bartholomew'.<sup>72</sup> How that good, upright and devout man King Alfred had come to hear of India can hardly be guessed, unless he had become acquainted with that later version of the *Acts of Thomas* which is associated with the name of Gregory of Tours (c. AD 590). There seems to be no strong reason for doubting the statements made in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*. Christians made astonishingly long journeys in what we are pleased to call the Dark Ages. It is, however, perhaps more prudent to suppose that the emissaries of King Alfred made their way as far as Rome,

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and deposited there the alms intended for the remote Christians of the East, to be forwarded to them whenever a convenient opportunity might offer.

Now at last, after so much weighing of uncertain literary evidence, archaeology comes to the rescue, and offers the historian something literally solid of which, though not without certain reservations, he may take hold.

A Syriac manuscript, written sometime in the eighteenth century<sup>73</sup> gives evidence as follows:

In those days and in the days that followed, Syrian Fathers used to come to that town by order of the Catholicos of the East, and govern the diocese of India and Malabar, because it was from it that the Syrians used to go to other parts until they were dispersed. Then in the year 823, the Syrian Fathers Mar Sapor and Mar Parut (Piruz) with the illustrious Sabrisho came to India and reached Kullam. They went to the King Shakirbirthi, and asked from him a piece of land in which they could build a church for themselves and erect a town. He gave them the amount of land they desired, and they built a church and erected a town in the district of Kullam, to which Syrian bishops and metropolitans used to come by order of the Catholicos who sent them.

The interpretation of this document, as of all the others in the same tradition, abounds in difficulties. The names of the bishops appear in various forms as Xabro and Prodh, Sapor and Aphroth. Mingana has shown good reason for thinking that there were only two leaders and not three, in that Sapor and Sabrisho are really the same, and that the name of the bishop was actually Mārān Sabr-Isho, this being a common Syriac name and meaning 'Jesus is my hope'.<sup>74</sup> Scholars agree that the date AD 823 may be accepted, and that the king Shakirbirthi is to be identified with King Vīra Rāghava Cakravarti. It is clear that the bishops were not Indians but foreigners, probably from Persia or from Mesopotamia. They seem to have refounded Quilon, or at least strengthened it with an injection of foreign blood. Whereas earlier Christian associations are with an area further north, Cranganore and its neighbourhood, the name Quilon, which has so often appeared in our records, now takes on an unmistakably Christian connotation.

Confirmation of these events is afforded by a number of copper-plates which are still in existence and are in the possession of the Christians and Jews of Kerala.<sup>75</sup>

It is known that in the sixteenth century the Christians were in possession of a copper-plate, and in 1549 handed it over to the Portuguese. This has been lost and all attempts to discover it have been in vain. A Portuguese translation was made in 1544 and still exists.<sup>76</sup> But there is grave reason to doubt the reliability of this translation.

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The Jews of Cochin have in their possession a copper-plate, probably of the eighth or ninth century; and this, though it does not relate directly to our story, can be used to illustrate the plates in possession of the Christians.<sup>77</sup>

One single plate, probably of a considerably later date, perhaps 1320, records a grant made to Iravi Korttan of Cranganore.<sup>78</sup>

The first Christian charter consists of a single plate, written on both sides in *Vatteluttu* (old Tamil) script with a good many Grantha (Sanskrit) letters. A second plate belonging to this instrument appears to be missing.

The second Christian charter consists of five leaves, including two leaves with the signatures of witnesses in various languages. The first leaf of this series appears to be missing.<sup>79</sup>

In 1806, when Claudius Buchanan was visiting Travancore, the British resident Colonel Macaulay, a devout Christian deeply interested in the welfare of the Christians in those parts, recovered from the Dutch Record Room at Cochin a number of plates, of which he allowed Dr Buchanan to take facsimiles. The plates were then handed over to the metropolitan of the Syrian church. Of the surviving leaves three are preserved at Kottayam and two at Tiruvalla. Both instruments have been dated with considerable probability in the same year, AD 880. Each is a grant made in Council by Ayyan king of Vēnād, that is the southern portion of Travancore, in the reign of Sthānu Ravi, the supreme ruler of the area (about AD 877-907).

In the first, at the instance of Maruwan Sapir Iso, whom there is reason to identify with Mārān Sabr-Isho the bishop, certain rights are reserved in perpetuity to the Christians of the Tarisa (Orthodox?) church at Quilon. Most important of these is the guardianship of the steelyard, the weights and the royal stamp (*Kappan*), which had previously been enjoyed by the king of Vēnād. Certain families of lower caste are assigned to the Christians for the maintenance of the church. If these people commit any offence, the right of holding trial is reserved to the authorities of the church.<sup>80</sup>

In the second and much longer instrument a number of families are assigned to the church to cultivate the lands obtained for the church by Maruwan Sapir Iso. The boundaries of the land are fixed, though not very exactly defined. The right of trial for offences committed within these boundaries is reserved to the church. Reference is made also to the weights and steelyard as above. The seventy-two social privileges are granted. The Christians are to enjoy the protection of the militia of 600, of the Jews and of the Maṇigrāmakkār.<sup>81</sup> Extensive privileges are accorded to these two communities, provided that they 'shall act as laid down in this copper-plate deed, as long as the earth, the moon and the sun will endure'.

The picture which emerges is impressive. The Christians are clearly a well-established community, accepted and highly respected. The granting of responsibility for the weights and measures is an unusual sign of

confidence; it may indicate that these immigrants had attained to a higher level of mathematical and commercial competence than the Indians among whom they had settled. The slaves assigned to them would probably be baptised, and thus the Christian community would increase. The allocation of responsibility for the protection of this community to Jews and Mañigrāmakkār (presumably the indigenous Christians) suggest that this was a small community the rights of which had to be carefully safeguarded by others stronger than they.

The signatures of witnesses are particularly interesting. They are written in the Kufic form of Arabic, in Hebrew, or rather in a kind of Persian written in Hebrew letters, and in Pehlevi.<sup>82</sup> Apparently the foreign community consisting of Muslims, Christians, Zoroastrians and Jews, was regarded as in some sense a unity as distinct from the local rulers and their subjects.

One more piece of solid evidence of early Christian presence in South India remains to be considered.

In 1547 the Portuguese were engaged in digging the foundations for an oratory on the alleged site of the martyrdom of St Thomas, when they found unexpectedly an ancient granite cross. This cross, of unusual type, was incised beneath an arch, around which was an inscription in unknown letters and an unknown tongue. Since then, four other similar crosses have been found in various places in Travancore. The general view of archaeologists is that the 1547 cross, commonly called the Thomas cross, is the original and that the others are copies, or copies of copies.<sup>83</sup>

Since the Portuguese and others supposed that this cross was already in existence in the days of the apostle and had perhaps looked down upon his martyrdom, it was from the beginning treated with the greatest reverence; before long miraculous properties were ascribed to it and various miracles were recorded.

The curiosity of the Portuguese was aroused by the mysterious inscription, but there was no one who could interpret. Eventually a Daniel was found in the person of a learned Kanarese Brāhman, who undertook to read the writing, and interpreted it no doubt to his own satisfaction and to that of the waiting Portuguese. This interpretation was distinguished among other interpretations by the fact that it made no contact at any point whatever with the language or the meaning of the original which it professed to expound. Since, however, the rendering proved to be highly edifying, it was readily accepted by the Portuguese and widely distributed. It became sufficiently well-known to be included by Cardinal Baronius in his *Annales*.<sup>84</sup>

Scholars came to agree that the inscription was in Pehlevi, middle Persian. But no serious attempt was made to decipher it, until A.C. Burnell

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undertook the difficult task, and published his results in the *Indian Antiquary* for 1874. As read by him the inscription reads:

In punishment by the cross (was) the suffering of this One;  
He who is the true Christ, and God above, and Guide ever pure.

This yields good sense, and is quite appropriate. But not all scholars were convinced that Burnell had found the true solution; in the next half century a number of other solutions appeared, distinguished, if by nothing else, by their almost total difference from one another. A new day dawned when, at the request of Professor F.C. Burkitt,<sup>85</sup> C.P.T. Winckworth, at that time reader in Assyriology in the university of Cambridge, took the matter in hand, and produced a version which differed radically from all that had come from the hands of earlier scholars. This version which was read before the International Congress of Orientalists held at Oxford in 1925<sup>86</sup> is as follows:

My Lord Christ, have mercy upon Afras son of Chaharbukht the Syrian, who cut this (or, who caused this to be cut).

This met with immediate acceptance, though with reservations on minor points, and has never been radically challenged. So attempts to find profound theology, Nestorian or other, in the inscription have had to be abandoned. It turns out to be no more than the expression of a natural and rather simple piety.

Palaeographers are in agreement that the style of the lettering is consistent with a date in the eighth century. It is tempting to think that Afras may be the same as that Mar Prodh (Aphroth) whose name we have found in various forms of the tradition, and who is alleged to have arrived in India in AD 823. If so, he may well have brought with him from Persia an exemplar from which the Indian cross was carved.<sup>87</sup> Once this cross had become familiar to the local Christians, they might well conclude that this was the right kind of cross to have displayed in their churches; so the copies which have been identified came to be cut by masons who did not know the language or meaning of the inscription, and perhaps many others of which we have no knowledge.

#### 5 A SUMMARY OF THE EVIDENCE

The story of the ancient church of the Thomas Christians is of great significance for the whole history of Christianity in India. It is to be regretted that, when all the evidence has been collected and sifted, much remains uncertain and conjectural. What history can offer, here as elsewhere, is not certainty but probability in various degrees:

### *A Summary of the Evidence*

It is almost certain that there were well-established churches in parts of South India not later than the beginning of the sixth century and perhaps from a considerably earlier date; but

it is probable that these were at least in part churches of foreigners, worshipping in Syriac and cared for by foreign priests and bishops.

There is a possibility that already existing Christian forces in India were strengthened by a considerable immigration in the first half of the fourth century, and

it is at least possible that the immigrants came intending to join themselves to Christian groups, of the existence of which they were already aware.

It is probable that a part at least of the indigenous element in the Indian church belonged originally not to Kerala but to the Pāṇḍiyan kingdom. The continuance over many centuries of the tradition associating St Thomas with Mylapore suggests that the first Christianisation of that area goes back to very early times.

There are traces of the existence of Christian communities in other parts of India, but these are uncertain, and do not suggest that continuity of which we have clearer evidence in the south.

When the Christian community in Kerala emerges into the clear light of history, it seems to have been a rather prosperous, indeed wealthy, body, enjoying the favour of the local rulers, and with guarantees for protection against injury.

There is no clear evidence of attempts by the Indian Christian community to propagate its faith in the non-Christian society in the midst of which it had its existence.

For the first three centuries of the Christian era we have nothing that could be called clear historical evidence – references to India may relate to countries that would not today be called India.

It is possible that in this dark period the apostle Thomas came to India and that the foundation of the Indian church goes back to him; we can only regret the absence of any sure historical evidence to support this view.

Millions of Christians in South India are certain that the founder of their church was none other than the apostle Thomas himself. The historian cannot prove to them that they are mistaken in their belief. He may feel it right to warn them that historical research cannot pronounce on the matter with a confidence equal to that which they entertain by faith.

## 3 · From Medieval to Modern

### I POLITICAL CHANGES

In our attempt to penetrate the obscurity which at many points still rests on the story of the first coming of Christianity to India, we left on one side the contemporary developments in politics, literature and religion which form the background of the later penetration of the Indian world by the Christian Gospel. Many things, in that period of nearly a thousand years, are still no more than dimly known – the rise and fall of kingdoms, the movements of armies of invaders, the emergence of great cities and the disappearance of others well known to earlier history. In this chapter we shall be concerned in the main with two questions – what traces are there during this period of Western influence on India and of Indian influence on the Western world; and, what permanent contribution was made by the movements of these centuries to the complicated situation which faced Christians from abroad, when at last direct connection between Europe and India was re-established at the end of the fifteenth century?

With the gradual decay of the Maurya power,<sup>1</sup> the destiny of northern India fell into the hands of a number of small and weak kingdoms, perpetually at war with one another and in a continual state of ebb and flow. But the idea of the *cakravartin*, the king of kings, who would subdue all things to himself and introduce peace and order into a vast area, was never lost. After an interval of five centuries the old ideal emerged from the shadows, and clothed itself in flesh and blood in the rulers of the Gupta dynasty. The first of these rulers, Candragupta I, came to the throne in AD 319, it may be a little earlier or later.

The Guptas were not of royal origin; in fact it seems that originally they were no more than large landholders in the region of Magadha. But members of this gifted family succeeded in exalting themselves to power and in holding the reins of dominion for close on two centuries. The most successful of them all, Candragupta II, who reigned from 375 to 415,<sup>2</sup> was victorious in a campaign against the Śakas (c. AD 405), a success which was of more than military significance, since it safeguarded the Gupta dominions from invasion from beyond the passes, and also gave them access



## *Political Changes*

to the western sea and to the possibilities of trade beyond the frontiers of India. For a brief period the way from west to east and from east to west was open.

At its greatest the empire of the Guptas was less in extent than that of Aśoka. And, when it was at the height of its expansion, its power was brought low by one of those unpredictable and disastrous invasions which have punctuated the whole of Indian history. The Huns (Huṅas) were a central Asian people, whose name spread terror far and wide in Europe no less than in Asia. They seem to have had no instinct to settle and to create, though they understood all too well how to burn, to pillage and to destroy. The century and a half (AD 450–600) during which they controlled great areas of northern India was a time of sheer misery for all, during which many ancient landmarks were swept away.

Fortunately for India, the Huns themselves were vulnerable and were not immune from attack from the rear; it seems that pressure from Turks and Persians compelled them to look to their own safety; by the end of the sixth century they were no longer a menace to the inhabitants of the Indian plains.

One more attempt was made to establish a great dominion in north India. Harṣavardhana of the Puṣpabhūti family came to the throne in AD 606,<sup>3</sup> and reigned for a little more than forty years. We know more of this ruler than of almost any other of that age through the chance that has preserved for us the elaborate life of him, the *Harṣacarita* of Bāṇabhaṭṭa,<sup>4</sup> one of the founders of classical Indian prose, and through the visit to his court of the Chinese Buddhist pilgrim Hsüan Tsang, who gives a somewhat enthusiastic account of the ruler and his court.<sup>5</sup> Harsha was an able ruler, who travelled widely, and did his utmost to maintain peace and justice in his dominions. But he had not the art of giving permanence to his achievements, and had no successor: 'The secret of establishing a military power founded on traditional strength was not his; nor did the mass of the people feel that the conquests of Śrī Harsha were their own triumph . . . He could conquer; he could not build. The way of the Guptas was, therefore, barred to him.'<sup>6</sup> After him, from time to time there were powerful rulers in various parts of India; but the *cakravartin* did not in reality appear again until Bābur, by the great victory of Pānīpat in 1526, brought the Mughuls to power, and laid the foundations of that empire which more than any which had preceded it succeeded in bringing almost the whole of the sub-continent under the control of a single ruler.

## 2 ART, LITERATURE AND PHILOSOPHY

By general consent the Gupta period and that which followed it are known as the classic period of Indian civilisation. No doubt periods of peace and prosperity favour the flowering and the productivity of human genius. But,

once that flowering has taken place, even adversity and disorder seem unable to destroy what has come into being. Though a great deal has been lost to us, the six centuries following the accession of the Guptas to power are marked by supreme achievements in the field of literature, of the plastic arts, and of philosophy, which make of those years one of the great periods in the history of the human race.

This mature civilisation unhesitatingly accepted Sanskrit, the refined and developed form of the ancient Vedic speech, as its medium of literary and philosophic communication. Both Buddhists and Jains had chosen to write in languages nearer to the speech of ordinary mortals. The choice of Sanskrit is a clear sign of the recovery of Hinduism, and in particular of the Brahmanical influence; it is noteworthy that Buddhism also, especially in its *Mahāyāna* form, found it expedient to return from Pāli, the simpler language, to the more ancient and classical form of expression.

The Sanskrit tradition had never entirely died out. The *Mahabhāratha* in its final form can hardly be earlier than the second century AD. But the literary production of the Gupta period makes it clear that Sanskrit was far more than a learned language, an archaic survival preserved only in the world of scholars and pedants. Professor A.B. Keith has argued that 'Sanskrit was regularly used in conversation by the upper classes, court circles eventually following the example of the Brahmins in this regard.'<sup>7</sup>

Of the innumerable types of Sanskrit literature produced in the centuries under review, by far the most widely influential was the didactic tale or fable. This mode, with its curious method of the enclosure of a tale within a tale, after the fashion of a Chinese box,<sup>8</sup> proved irresistible, and in course of time spread Indian influence to the farthest limits of the western world, albeit, it must be acknowledged, in the majority of cases without acknowledgment. The origins of the first great collection, the *Pañcatantra*, may go back as early as the second century AD. This textbook for the instruction of kings in politics and in the practical conduct of everyday life contains every kind of tale, and not all are by any means edifying. But a work which contains the lines

Righteousness is the one friend who accompanies a man even in death:  
For all the rest perisheth together with the body

cannot be accused of a total lack of moral sensitiveness.

The most distinguished, if not the most popular, of the forms of literature produced in this classic age is the Indian drama.<sup>9</sup> The most famous of the dramatic poets is Kālidāsa (late fourth century, or possibly later). Among the plays of Kālidāsa by far the most famous is *Śakuntalā*, or rather the *Recognition of Śakuntalā*, since central in the action of the play is the ring by which at last the king is able to recognise the beloved, whose identity had been for a time concealed from him.

*Śakuntalā* was one of the first of Indian works to become known in the West. Translated by Sir William Jones, it appeared in English in 1789,<sup>10</sup> and in a German translation from the English in 1791. The sudden and startled delight of Herder and Goethe is a matter of history. Goethe received the German translation on 17 May 1791; on 1 July of the same year he sent to his friend F.H. Jacobi the poem in which occurs the well-known stanza:

Would'st thou have the flowers of the spring  
And the fruit of the fading years,  
That which enchants and delights,  
That which nurtures and satisfies?  
Would'st thou grasp heaven and earth in a single name?  
Then I give thee the name of *Sakuntalā*,  
And then there is nothing more to be said.

In many ways the play deserves the almost extravagant praise that has been lavished upon it. For purity and excellence of Sanskrit speech, for mastery of intricate metres, for apt use of metaphor and a sense of the intimate harmony between man and nature, for the sensitive depiction of love in all its phases, for tender delineation of sorrow, *Kālidāsa* is declared by Indian students to be supreme.

*Kālidāsa* had had predecessors and was to have successors. But the art of drama in India seems to have reached a rapid flowering, and then to remain only for a short period on its pinnacle of excellence. Like the great drama of the Athenians, it experienced a short period of glory and then a long age of gradual obsolescence.

This reference to the Greeks raises the question, which has been endlessly debated, as to a possible dependence of India on Hellas as a source of inspiration for its drama. The possibility cannot be wholly excluded, but on balance such dependence must be regarded as highly unlikely. From the third century AD onwards the West and India had drifted into almost complete isolation from one another. There were no longer living sources of Greek inspiration in India itself, since the Greek kingdoms of the north-west had almost ceased to exist. Roman commerce with India had diminished. Constantinople was for many centuries one of the greatest trading cities of the world; but its merchants seem to have by-passed India and to have used the great land routes which carried them across the vast expanses of Central Asia to the shores of the Pacific. At the same time, India seems to have stretched out its hands rather to south-east Asia and to the far east than to the west.

Cultural similarity is not always a sign of cultural dependence. There seems little reason to doubt that the Indian drama is of purely Indian origin. It is the whole-hearted adoption of the Brāhmanic attitude to life and to the understanding of human life and destiny which makes the Indian drama

throughout its history so different from the Greek.

The same question may be asked, and the same answer given, in relation to another aspect of Gupta civilisation, the visual arts. The tradition of Gandhāra art did, indeed, linger long in certain areas of India and exercised much influence. But Gupta sculpture and painting seem to owe little to this source of inspiration; their affiliation, if any, is rather to the more specifically Indian art of Mathurā, and to all that flowed from it. Western influence must be reckoned with as a possibility; of such influence no unmistakable evidence has been found.

Here, once again, we encounter a wonderful efflorescence of the human spirit, the perfect expression in classical form of a specific understanding of the world and of human life. These works 'reflect the same phase of luxurious aristocratic culture' as the great literary works that we have been considering.<sup>11</sup> Many factors have gone into the great achievements of Gupta art – intense interest in nature and in the forms of flower and animal life, careful study of the human form especially as this finds expression in the stylised movements of the dance, the skilled use of materials based on endless practice and finding its reward in freedom in execution within the limits of certain techniques and traditions of artistic creation.

The period of supreme achievement in the plastic arts was of brief duration. Sensitiveness too easily turned into sentimentality, genuine inventiveness into mannerism; technical skill was used to cover lack of originality; nervous tension took the place of serenity; and the copying of old masterpieces occupied the time of those skilled craftsmen who could not think for themselves. 'Nobility is very common in Gupta sculpture of the fifth century, but it soon turned into a smooth superficial elegance.'<sup>12</sup>

If decay sets in at one point of human achievement, the impoverished spirit seems to come to life in another, and perhaps very different, area of intellectual and artistic activity. The great Gupta period may be judged to have come to an end not later than AD 600. In the following centuries, the Indian spirit was to exercise itself in the metaphysical field, in the enormous intellectual travail involved in the determination to penetrate the farthest recesses of thought and to wrest from the universe its final secrets. There had been no real break in the continuity of Indian thought from the time of the *Upaniṣads*; what are commonly known as the six systems of Indian philosophy had grown up slowly over the centuries.<sup>13</sup> Of the six, the *Vedānta* had exercised by far the greatest influence on later ages. In the *Vedānta* tradition one figure stands out, by common consent, as reaching the highest level of philosophical excellence, Śaṅkarāchārya.

Many and various opinions have been held as to the date of the life and activity of this paragon of wisdom; but the learned world seems to have

moved towards agreement that he was born towards the end of the eighth century,<sup>14</sup> and that his work of writing and teaching falls in the first half of the ninth. It is, furthermore, agreed that he was born in the Malabar area of southern India; but he travelled so widely in the search for knowledge, and in missionary zeal to destroy false teaching, that no one place can be called his home.<sup>15</sup> In dialectical skill, in penetrating understanding, in discernment of the weakness in the case of an opponent, in lucidity of exposition, Śāṅkara can be compared only to the very greatest in other areas – with Aristotle and Thomas Aquinas in ancient and medieval times, with Spinoza and Leibniz in the modern world.

The aim of Śāṅkara can be summed up in a single sentence – to restore to the philosophy of the *Upaniṣads* that primacy which in his opinion belonged to it as of right, but which had been obscured by the divagations of lesser thinkers. That philosophy can be summed up in the profound phrase, which we have already encountered – *Tat tvam asi*, 'that art thou'. There can be only one reality, true, ageless, unchanging, the Brahman in all things. This Brahman 'is thus the essence of us all, the self, and hence it remains undenied even when one tries to deny it, for even in the denial it shows itself forth. It is the self of us all and is hence ever present to us in all our cognitions.'<sup>16</sup>

Many do not recognise this truth, and therefore they live in the world of ignorance, nescience, supposing that the phenomenal world, the product of *māyā*, illusion, is reality.<sup>17</sup> Ignorance is the great enemy. In this system, salvation comes by the dawning of right knowledge of the Brahman and of the self. This is, however, an aristocratic system, and the path to salvation, *mukti*, deliverance, is long and hard, and much depends on finding the right teacher. But, given diligence and wise guidance, the eager student may hope to attain. If he does reach his goal, this is a stage in which the pure light of Brahman shines forth in its unique glory as the identity of being, pure intelligence, and complete bliss (*sat-cit-ānanda*), and all the rest vanishes as illusory nothingness. One who has thus attained is a *jīvanmukta*, one who has become emancipated while still living. 'For him all world-appearance has ceased. He is the one light burning alone in himself where everything else has vanished for ever from the stage.'<sup>18</sup> It may be that he will continue for a time to exist, but will then give himself, as Śāṅkarāchārya himself did, to the work of teaching others, in order that as many souls as possible may come to the realm of blessedness.

This doctrine is far more than philosophy in the general acceptance of that term; it includes almost everything that in Western thought would be counted as religion. The teaching of Śāṅkara may be regarded as the culmination of the Hindu renaissance, and of the final rejection of Buddhism by the Indian mind. It is as though Śāṅkara declared that

everything which is of value in Buddhism has now been incorporated into the Hindu system, and that Buddhism may therefore disappear since it has nothing to offer to the Hindu which he cannot find in a truly Hindu system of thought and of mystic unity with Being.

The doctrine of the unchanging one as set forth by Śaṅkara, the pure *Advaita*, the doctrine of One-without-a-second, manifests certain similarities to the philosophic doctrine of the later Greek philosophers. The teaching of Plotinus (third century) culminates in the vision of the One which is the source of all being and all truth. This teaching, one of the principal sources of mysticism in the west, at an early date made its way into the thinking of the Eastern Christian church. It found extensive expression in the writings of the sixth-century monk who called himself Dionysius the Areopagite, and thence passed to western Europe and into the mystical thinking of both Jews and Muslims.<sup>19</sup>

Resemblance does not always involve dependence. Yet the resemblances between Neoplatonism and the Indian *Advaita* are sufficiently striking to demand consideration.<sup>20</sup>

After the period of the emperor Trajan (98–117), commercial relations between the Roman Empire and India became less intimate than they had been in the first century AD, but they did not wholly die away. The number and quality of the Roman coins found on Indian soil is convincing evidence of the decline, but equally shows that it was not absolute. In the other direction Indian princes continued to send embassies to the Roman emperors; we have records of Indian embassies from the time of Elagabalus (218–22), Aurelian (270–5) and Constantine (306–37).<sup>21</sup> Alexandria continued to be a great international city, in the streets of which representatives of many nations could be encountered. Ctesiphon in Mesopotamia was an *entrepot* for the wares of those trafficking between East and West.

In Porphyry's *Life of Plotinus* we have an unexpected note, suggesting the possibility that the traffic persisted on other than purely commercial lines:

He became eager to investigate the Persian methods and the system adopted among the Indians. It happened that the Emperor Gordian was at that time preparing his campaign against Persia; Plotinus joined the army and went on the expedition . . . When Gordian was killed in Mesopotamia, it was only with great difficulty that Plotinus came off safe to Antioch.<sup>22</sup>

The date was AD 244. Plotinus had to abandon his plan without having got even as far as Ctesiphon, though at Apamea on the Orontes he may have had the opportunity of acquainting himself with the philosophy of Numenius.

The influence of Iran on the west can be traced in the Jewish apocryphal writings, in the works of the Gnostics, and in the writings of the Manicheans, whom we know from recent papyrus discoveries in Egypt to

have had a considerable following in that country. Plotinus wrote one of his longest treatises (11.9) *Against the Gnostics*, to which Porphyry has added the sub-title 'Against those who say that the fashion of the universe is evil, and that the universe itself is evil.' We cannot tell, however, whether the interest of Plotinus in Indian philosophy was due simply to curiosity as to what lies beyond, or whether he had some acquaintance, even distant, with what Indians were thinking and teaching. If he had any such acquaintance, it must have been derived rather from chance contacts with Indians in Alexandria, or less probably in Rome, than from any travels and researches in the East.

Occasional glimpses of 'naked philosophers' in such writers as Plutarch, Philo of Alexandria and Strabo, indicate that reports of the Jains and their habits had reached the western world.<sup>23</sup> One faint echo of interest in India comes to us from that remarkable lady the Empress Julia Domna, described by Ernest Renan as 'téméraire jusqu'à l'utopie',<sup>24</sup> and in the more sober phrase of Professor J. Bidez 'as it were predestined to become the high-priestess of a syncretistic polytheism'.<sup>25</sup> She it was who had entrusted to Philostratus (c. 170–245) the task of writing the life of Apollonius of Tyana, the sage of the first century, who was alleged to have found support for his theosophy in the wisdom of India and to have left a profound impression on the minds of the sages of that country – an affirmation not supported by any information that comes to us from Indian sources.

Such scattered details do not together amount to anything like evidence for any direct influence of East on West or of West on East. It must be taken as more probable that Greek monism and Indian monism are independent products of the human mind, working on similar problems in different times and situations. Minds of such philosophical subtlety as those of the Greek philosophers from Pythagoras to Proclus, and of the Indian thinkers from the time of the *Upaniṣads* to Śaṅkara, may well have been led by diverse processes of thought to the essentially similar concept of an undifferentiated and timeless One underlying the endlessly varied phenomena of human experience. The evidence does not justify us in suggesting, even tentatively, any specifically Christian influence on the classical philosophy of India.<sup>26</sup>

### 3 SOUTH INDIA AND THE 'BHAKTI' MOVEMENT

The centre of interest now shifts to the Dravidian world, in which profound changes, both political and religious, were taking place during India's middle age. Out of a plethora of small kingdoms there emerged in these centuries the three great South Indian kingdoms of the Cheras in the region known today as Kerala, of the Coḷas, who have given their name to the coast of Coromandel, and the Pāṇḍiyas, rulers in the southern extremity of the

sub-continent. At the same time, a great religious revolution was taking place, which resulted in the emergence of Hinduism as the dominant religion of the South. In the year 500 Jainism was the strongest religious force in the Dravidian world, with Buddhism as a near second. By AD 1000 Buddhism had almost completely disappeared,<sup>27</sup> and Jains were in process of being reduced to the situation of a small minority, as they have remained ever since. How had this transformation come about?

The Tamil romance *Manimekalai* ('the jewelled girdle'), perhaps of the sixth century,<sup>28</sup> moves wholly in the atmosphere of Buddhist faith and practice. The heroine, a dancing girl, to the displeasure of her public has become a Buddhist ascetic. In the very last section of the poem, the heroine's mother Mādhavi receives instruction in Buddhist learning, and, her doubts and darkness being removed, adopts the garb and practice of the Buddhist devotee. But when the Chinese pilgrim Hsüan Tsang was in South India in AD 640, he reports, though not as an eye-witness, that in the southern part of the Tamil country, though Hindu temples were numerous and Jain ascetics were everywhere, Buddhism was almost extinct, the majority of the ancient shrines being in ruins.<sup>29</sup>

There is no hint of any kind of religious persecution. The decay of Buddhism seems to have been due to an inner desiccation which made it unable to stand against the revival of Hinduism, when this came.<sup>30</sup>

The story of Jainism is different, and includes one of the rare examples of religious violence in the history of Hindu India.

Once again the evidence of Hsüan Tsang is of capital importance. During the visit to South India already alluded to, he tells us that he found Digambara Jain ascetics and Jain temples numerous in both the Pallava realm (Drāvida), and in the Pāṇḍyan kingdom.<sup>31</sup> Literary evidence adds weight to the testimony of Hsüan Tsang. The *Cīvakacintāmaṇi* of Tirutakkatēvar, which Dr G.U. Pope regarded as being on the whole the greatest existing literary monument in Tamil,<sup>32</sup> has been placed as early as the seventh century and as late as the tenth. Tradition tells us that the author was a Jain. There is nothing in the poem itself to throw doubt on the tradition and it may be taken as authentic. The atmosphere of the poem is that of a confident and well-established faith.

But persecution seems to have fallen at one point on the Jains. A Pāṇḍyan king named Kūna or Neḍumāran had been brought up as a Jain. He married a Coḷa princess, who remained a staunch Hindu and set herself to convert her husband. Once restored to the Hindu faith, the king demanded of his co-religionists that they should follow his example and apostatise. When they refused to do so, no less than eight thousand of them were condemned to death by impalement.<sup>33</sup> This story is in such flagrant contradiction of the generally mild and gentle character of the Indian religious tradition that it



can hardly have been invented. It seems to be necessary to accept the massacre, abominable as it is, as historic fact. This event may mark the beginning of the revival of Hinduism, and therefore the beginning of the slow decline of Jainism from a dominant to a subordinate position in the religious life of South India.

One feature in the story is significant in relation to the stages of religious development in South India. It is reported that the Coḷa princess was aided in her ardent work of conversion by Tiruñānacambantar,<sup>34</sup> one of the great saints of the Śaivite *bhakti* movement. This information supplies us simultaneously with two valuable pieces of information.

We learn the basic cause for the changed religious situation in South India. Buddhism and Jainism lost their ascendancy in the Tamil land not only because of inner decay and inertia, but still more by reason of a tremendous upsurge of Hindu belief and devotion, which took the form of a wide-spread *bhakti* movement. This movement offered to meet the need felt by the Dravidian peoples for something which apparently the other two great religions had not been able in that period to supply.<sup>35</sup>

It is possible on the basis of this evidence to fix at least approximately the date of the beginning of this great movement. The persecution of the Jains is brought into direct connection with the work of one of the great leaders of the Hindu revival. Since the reign of Nedumāran can be fixed in the seventh century, we can determine with some confidence the date in history at which the great Hindu revival began. The suggested date fits in well with such evidence as is afforded by the probabilities of literary development. There is no hint of such an outpouring of Hindu devotion in the early poems of the Anthologies and the Idylls, in the earlier romances, or in such early ethical writings as the Tirukkuraḷ.<sup>36</sup> And, though isolated examples can be quoted from earlier writers (e.g. the *Paripāṭal*, not later than AD 500), the full flowering of the movement belongs to a later date than that. In the writings of these Tamil saints and seers we are confronted by eloquent outpourings of the Dravidian spirit in verses of considerable literary merit, saturated through and through with intense religious devotion. The heart and soul of this whole literature is *bhakti*, that ardent devotion to a single chosen god, which we have met already in the *Bhagavadgītā*, and there identified as one of the sources of the Hindu recovery in northern India.<sup>37</sup>

The evidence available to us does not enable us to trace in detail the way in which the *bhakti* idea travelled from north to south India, not even to guess at the date at which the *Bhagavadgītā* first became known in the Tamil country. But there is evidence to show that *bhakti* was regarded as having in a special way its home in South India, and as being in part at least a product of the Tamil genius: 'In some particular places, O great king, and largely in Drāvīda countries, where the rivers Tāmraparṇi, Kṛtamālā,

Payasvinī, the most holy Kāvēri, and the great Western Mahānadi flow, and those men who drink of their waters, O king of men, pure in mind mostly become devoted to the blessed Lord Vāsudeva.' So the *Bhāgavata-purāṇa* pays tribute to the saints and sages of the Tamil country.<sup>38</sup>

In another passage *Bhakti* is personified and herself recounts her history:

I am called *bhakti* . . . listen to my life-story with all attention, O treasure of asceticism! . . . Born in Drāviḍa country, I grew up in Karnāṭaka. In Mahārāṣṭra and Gujarāt I became old . . . Having arrived then at Vrindāvan, renewed and all beautiful, I have become young now with the most perfect and lovable charm . . . I quit this place and go to a foreign country.<sup>39</sup>

The Śaivite form of South Indian *bhakti* seems to be rather older than the Vaiṣṇavite. It found expression primarily in the *Tevāram*, the extensive collections of the hymns of the three great saints and poets, Appar, Cuntarar and Cambantar, the *nāyanmār* of Śaivite tradition.

Śiva, as depicted in the outpourings of these poets, bears much resemblance to the wild gods of Dravidian tradition, and also to the Rudra of the *Vedas*, the god of the wild places, whom there is reason to regard as probably a Dravidian god.<sup>40</sup> In the *trimūrti*, the Hindu pantheon, Śiva is the destroyer, the tasks of creation and preservation being assigned respectively to Brahmā and Viṣṇu. But in this tradition Śiva has absorbed into himself all the three functions, and is so far exalted that even Brahmā and Viṣṇu cannot penetrate the secret of his being. Viṣṇu is an older and more respectable god, though he seems to have been domesticated in the Dravidian world rather later than Śiva, perhaps because there was no god in the Dravidian pantheon to whom he could readily be equated. Those who sing his praises are known as the *Ālvārs*, and their work is contained in the *Nālāyiradīvyaprabandham*, the sacred collection of four thousand stanzas.

The supreme expression of the Tamil mystical tradition is to be found in the writings of Māṇickavācakar, and especially in his *Tiruvāçakam*. The name is a title and not a proper name – he whose words are as jewels; the title of his most famous work means 'the divine utterance'. The greater sophistication of religious thought and the perfect mastery of metre suggest that Māṇickavācakar represents the apex, and not as some have thought, the pioneer stage of the great *bhakti* movement.<sup>41</sup>

What binds these various traditions together is the common emphasis on the divine initiative; the god has revealed himself, and the recipient of the revelation makes no claim to any merit of his own. This gracious divine activity is expressed by the Tamil word *aruḷ* – no Christian writer has been tempted to translate this Tamil term by any other word than 'grace'. *Arul* can in fact be used in almost all the senses in which the Greek word *charis* is found in the New Testament.<sup>42</sup>

## South India and the 'Bhakti' movement

This divine revelation is not a disembodied mysticism; it takes place, and this binds it very firmly to the Dravidian tradition, in a temple, and is closely linked to the image, the outward and visible form, in which the divinity is housed. This revelation is followed by ecstatic joy, not infrequently expressed in frankly erotic terms; the god has made the devotee his own; he dwells within him. The worshipper feels himself to be wholly at one with the god who has found him and whom he has found. But this experience does not lead the devotee to separate himself from the companionship of his fellow human-beings; on the contrary, he delights to resort to the temples and to sing the praises of his lord in the company of others who have shared a like experience with his own.

Tamil is the natural language of the South Indian saints. But the movement had also its Sanskrit expressions.

The *Bhāgavatapurāṇa*, which some scholars assign to the ninth century though it may be earlier, develops at great length the worship of Kṛṣṇa, dwelling especially on his childhood experiences, and setting forth a path of *bhakti* experience more emotional than that of the Tamil writers. But in South India Sanskrit has not been widely known outside Brāhmanical circles; the fortunes of the *Bhāgavatapurāṇa* were made when it moved out of its original home into the Āryan realm.

The South can claim one great philosopher and writer of Sanskrit as expositor of the *bhakti* mood, Śrī Rāmānuja (c. 1050–1137). The German Indologist Rudolf Otto wrote a book with the title *India's Religion of Grace*;<sup>43</sup> the title is well chosen; more deeply perhaps than any other Indian philosopher Rāmānuja has expounded the divine *grace*, *prasāda*, and human response, *prapatti*, total surrender to the approach of that grace.<sup>44</sup> Jan Gonda has well summed it up. Rāmānuja,

as founder of the greatest of all the Vaiṣṇavite confessions, as rejuvenator of the *bhakti* form of piety, as penetrating thinker, was able to bring together the traditions of the Upaniṣads, the Vedānta of Bādārāyana, the monotheistic system, combined with mythology, of the religion of Vāsudeva-Narāyana, and the inspiration of the Ālvārs, whose poems he instructed his disciples to collect, into one harmonious whole. So this Brāhman from the Tamil South has influenced the spiritual life of India more perhaps than any other theologian of the Vaiṣṇavite school.<sup>45</sup>

Sanskrit-speaking *bhakti* did not lack for philosophical expression; the same can be predicated of Tamil *bhakti*, but here in the Śaivite and not in the Vaiṣṇavite form of belief and worship.

The period of high poetic inspiration came to an end not later than the closing years of the tenth century. The poets were never forgotten; their hymns continued to be sung in all the temples and new hymns continued to

be written. But the next period was that of the philosophers, who between the twelfth and fifteenth centuries worked out the system known as the Śaiva-Siddhānta. This, though deeply influenced by Sanskrit models and traditions, has its own special characteristics and has deeply impressed upon it the Tamil genius and way of thinking.<sup>46</sup>

Śaiva-Siddhānta thought revolves round three principles – *pati*, *paśu*, *pāśam*. *Pati*, the Lord, is Śiva, here understood as the universal Lord, who combines in himself the functions of creation, preservation and destruction. *Paśu* is the flock, the souls which are under his care and protection. *Pāśam* is the bond, the mysterious power, which holds the souls in bodies and keeps them from finding their destiny in union with the Lord.

Salvation is achieved through *bhakti*, and *bhakti* leads to union with the divine. But this unity is not to be conceived as ontological unity, in which all distinction between soul and deity is done away. The devotee, absorbed in the ecstasy of union with the One whom he has sought, is unconscious of his separate existence. Yet there is still a real duality in the oneness; the union is of will and of affection, but not of substance.<sup>47</sup>

Between the Śaiva-Siddhānta system and the world of Christian thought there are certain clear resemblances. In both the concept of grace plays a leading part. In Christian mysticism, as in the Śaiva-Siddhānta concept of union with the divine, there is a place for duality within unity, a unity which is perfect in itself but does not exclude the co-existence of the Lover and the Beloved, the I and the Thou. The Christian student feels himself immediately at home in the world of Śaiva-Siddhānta; he cannot but raise the question whether there is not only likeness but also dependence of one upon the other.

That doughty Anglican champion of Tamil literature and philosophy Dr G.U. Pope had no doubt concerning Christian influences on South Indian thought. In his edition of the *Tirukkuraḷ* he wrote:

We are quite warranted in imagining Tiruvaḷḷuvar, the thoughtful poet, the eclectic, to whom the teaching of the Jains was as familiar as that of every Hindu sect . . . we may fairly, I say, picture him pacing along the seashore with the Christian teachers, and imbibing Christian ideas, tinged with the peculiarities of the Alexandrian school, and day by day working them into his own wonderful *Kurraḷ*.<sup>48</sup>

The brilliant imagination of Dr Pope has produced a beautiful romance. The sober verdict of historical judgement must be that any such Christian influence on Tamil literature is unlikely. At the time at which the *Kuraḷ* was produced, though there may have been here and there small groups of Christians in Tamil country, the vast majority of Christians was at that time to be found in Kerala, speaking Malayālam, which by this time was a language distinct from Tamil. Moreover those Christians used Syriac for all

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religious purposes, and seem to have made little if any attempt to communicate Christian truth in the local Indian tongues. Any extensive infiltration of Hindu thought by Christian influences must be ruled out as no more than a remote possibility. Here, as elsewhere, what we seem to see is devout minds in different places working on similar problems, and arriving independently at comparable results.<sup>49</sup>

### 4 THE COMING OF THE MUSLIMS

The changes so far recorded all took place within the well defined limits of Indian life and society. The coming of the Christians, even if we attribute to it the maximum possible range and depth of influence, produced no more than a ripple on the generally calm surface of the Indian lake. But now India was to be faced with convulsion and disruption to an extent unparalleled since the day of the *R̥g Veda*. Islam was to become the fourth great religion of the Indian sub-continent.

From time immemorial there had been traffic between the Persian Gulf and India. The Arabs had shewn themselves to be brave and skilful seamen; the term 'Arabian Sea' was no misnomer for the western part of the Indian Ocean. Long before the Greeks first entered the Asian world, the Arabs had crossed the ocean to India and had penetrated the countries of south-east Asia. Long before the Portuguese appeared in Asian waters, the Arabs had made themselves familiar with the eastern coast of Africa almost as far as its southern tip. They came to trade and not to conquer. But, like the Christians in later times, they had their coastal settlements, and had intermarried with the local inhabitants.<sup>50</sup>

When the religion of Islam became the faith of the peoples of Arabia, a new spirit entered into Arabian commercial expansion. Something of the crusading spirit, that carried the Arab armies in little more than a century after the death of the prophet in 632 to the heart of France and into the recesses of the Sahara, was introduced also into Arabian commercial expansion in Indian waters. The monopoly of trade which the Muslims succeeded in establishing throughout the Indian Ocean ended by cutting Europe off almost completely from Asia, with consequences which were to reverberate through the whole of Indian history in the succeeding centuries.

Significant as all this was, the effects were little felt beyond the maritime tracts. The presence of Islam in India began to have profound effects only when armies from Central Asia, following in the tracks of earlier invaders, came through the Makran, or descended through the north-western passes, overcame and pillaged the Indian peoples, and in a number of cases stayed to rule the peoples whom they had overcome in war.

Hinduism claims today with pride to be the most tolerant of all the great

religions of the world. Flexible in the extreme, it has shewn itself capable of absorbing many peoples of different origins, many different points of view and the most varying traditions. When Hinduism was confronted by Islam, nothing of the kind could take place. To the smooth and flexible outline of Hinduism, Islam opposed the finished pattern and hard exterior of a statue carved from basaltic rock. Hinduism is monistic in philosophy, but polytheistic in the minds of the great majority of its adherents; Islam maintains with the utmost severity the doctrine that there is one God only and no other. Hinduism has shewn itself increasingly inclined to represent the divine under a great variety of visible forms; to the Muslim an idol is an abomination; he desires nothing so much as to be able to destroy it. Hinduism has spread like oil poured out upon the surface of water; Islam has been from the start a missionary religion, violently militant and aggressive, authorised by its sacred book to offer to the unbelievers, other than those belonging to 'the religions of the book', the alternative of acceptance of the true faith or death.

The first serious invasion of India by Muslim troops took place in AD 711,<sup>51</sup> when Muhammad ibn-Qāsim set himself to the conquest of Sind; all the disagreeable features of Islamic conquest are recognisable even in this first invasion. The first city captured was Debul. In his enthusiasm for conversion Muhammad proceeded to circumcise, or to massacre, the Brāhmins of the city. Having become aware of the intense resentment and hostility always awakened in the minds of Hindu by such proceedings, he changed his policy, and by an unauthorised extension of Muslim law admitted the inhabitants as *dhimmis*, protected persons and payers of the *jizya*, the poll-tax.<sup>52</sup>

In the three succeeding centuries one sporadic raid followed upon another; Islamic armies came and went, and left behind them few permanent results. The full seriousness of the Islamic threat to India became clear only in the career of the most famous among the early Islamic invaders of India, Mahmūd of Ghaznī, who, starting in the year 1001, carried out in the following years no less than seven invasions of India. His principal aim was undoubtedly wealth – to pillage the unbelievers, and so to enrich the Dar-ul-Islam, the home of the true faith. But with this was mixed the religious impulse – the unbelievers must be constrained to submit, and the face of Islam must be made resplendent. This is plainly set forth by a contemporary historian:

Demolishing the idol temples, he established Islām in them. He marched and captured other cities and killed the polluted wretches, destroying the idolatrous and gratifying the Musulmāns . . . On the completion of his conquest he returned and promulgated accounts of the victories obtained for Islām, and every one, great

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and small, concurred in rejoicing over this result and thanking God . . . He then . . . vowed that every year he would undertake a holy war against Hind.<sup>53</sup>

The most notable achievement of Mahmūd was the sacking of the famous temple of Somnāth (Somanātha) in Gujarāt.<sup>54</sup> The great idol was carried off and broken into four parts; one of these was placed in the Jāmi' Masjid of Ghaznī, one at the entrance of the royal palace, the third was sent to Mecca, the fourth to Medina.

Mahmūd came and went; he was no more than a brigand on a major scale. But some of his successors installed themselves in permanence and established themselves as rulers of India. Like Aśoka and Candragupta before them, the Muslim rulers extended their dominions far to the south, but never managed to complete their conquest, or to bring the whole sub-continent under the dominion of a single ruler. Nevertheless for centuries a large part of the population of India was governed by rulers who were aliens in race, language, culture and religion to the peoples whom they had made their subjects.

In theory these rulers maintained all the arrogant intolerance of Muslim principle towards idolaters; their wars were holy wars and their victories were directly attributable to the favour of the God who had made them his own people. The accounts of these years provided by Muslim historians give the impression that 'the early Muslim occupation of northern India was one prolonged holy war waged for the extirpation of idolatry and the propagation of Islam'.<sup>55</sup> In reality the Muslim rulers were far too shrewd to maintain this attitude of religious intransigence, even if it had been possible. They were too few to keep a discontented populace perpetually in subjection, or to enforce conversion by a steady diet of religious persecution. These rulers were always glad to welcome cases of conversion by consent; but for the most part Hindus were allowed to live on in the shelter of their family idols and in the traditions of their fathers. As the British were later to discover, the Indian peasant does not care greatly by whom he is ruled, provided that he is well governed; nor is he likely to regard the religion of the ruler as his concern, provided that there is no unreasonable interference in his personal affairs. The peasant of those days was not likely to be worse off under a Muslim than he had been under a Hindu landlord.<sup>56</sup>

This may explain the limited success of the Muslims in India in substituting their own religion for that previously professed by their subjects, a success so much less than that obtained in Iran or Egypt or Asia Minor. Some regions have been almost completely Islamised, but Islam has never been more than a minority religion in Hindustan. Hinduism has an astonishing power of survival; while bowing before the conqueror, it has to a remarkable extent shown itself capable of maintaining its front unbroken.

### *From Medieval to Modern*

Mountstuart Elphinstone (1779–1859), who as an administrator had had long experience of both races, directed his attention to the matter, and summed up his conclusions as follows:

In India there was a powerful priesthood . . . and a religion interwoven with the laws and manners of the people, which exercised an irresistible influence over their very thoughts. To this was joined a horror of change and a sort of passive courage, which is perhaps the best suited to allow time for an impetuous attack to spend its force . . . there were other causes which tended to delay the progress of the Mahometans. The spirit of their government was gradually altered. Their chiefs, from fanatical missionaries, became politic sovereigns, more intent on the aggrandizement of their families than the propagation of their faith; and by the same degrees they altered from rude soldiers to magnificent and luxurious princes, who had other occupations besides war, and other pleasures as attractive as those of victory.<sup>57</sup>

For all that, during these centuries a great many Hindus did become Muslims. In this change coercion played its part; but, although social and economic pressure were continuous, as in Egypt and other areas of Muslim dominance, there is little evidence, after the first few years of violence, of persecution or of systematic attempts to extirpate Hindu faith and practice. Those who became Muslims for the most part did so of their own volition. Many of them belonged to the lowest orders of society; under the Hindu system they were deprived of every social advantage and of every possibility of improvement in their condition. They hoped to find, and certainly did find in Islam, though perhaps not as fully as they had expected, a removal of restrictions and wider possibilities of advancement.<sup>58</sup>

The two communities thus persisted in propinquity, but with little exchange of custom or sentiment. No doubt each in a measure influenced the other, but the measure of this influence is hard to determine. Those who had been rejected by Hindu society certainly brought with them into the world of Islam many of their old ideas and beliefs; but the pressures of society and increasing Islamic indoctrination created among them at least external conformity with the rites and customs of their new faith. Some indeed became ardent converts and propagandists for the Islamic way. There are few signs of any direct Islamic influence on the faith of those who had remained within the Hindu fold.<sup>59</sup>

The late medieval period was not lacking in attempts at reform of the Hindu system, and in attempts to bring the two great faiths nearer to one another. Two among these were attended by sufficient success to demand brief mention here.

Kabīr (c. 1440–1518) seems to have been of Muslim origin, but in the course of his life accepted a number of Hindu ideas. In the end he arrived at



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belief in one supreme God, who is to be found everywhere and neither in mosque nor temple. In his songs, which became highly popular, he ridicules idolatry and priestcraft, asceticism and the worship of many gods. One of the most familiar of his sayings runs: 'If God be in the mosque and Rama within the image, what lies outside? Look within your heart, for there you will find both Karim (the merciful) and Rama.'

Although there are many similarities between the sayings of Kabīr and Christian doctrine, especially in his teaching concerning *śabda*, the word, there is no reason to suppose that he came directly under Christian influence. The parallels can be more naturally explained from his knowledge of the doctrines of Islam.

The sect of the followers of Kabīr has never died out. In 1931, they were reckoned as numbering rather more than a million.<sup>60</sup> Kabīr is important in himself, but also by reason of the influence that he seems to have exercised on the second of the great reformers, Gurū Nānak.

Gurū Nānak (1469–1539) was a Kṣatriya, but under Muslim influence came to believe passionately in the unity of God, and regarded idolatry and caste distinctions as late perversions of the true and monotheistic ideals of Hinduism. As is often the fate of would-be reformers, he was destined not to reform either of the ancient faiths but to become the founder of a new religion.<sup>61</sup> His followers, to whom he gave the name *siks*, disciples, were to enter on a way separate from both Hinduism and Islam and to venerate their teacher as the founder of the Sikh religion.

There was a good deal of friendly co-operation between Hindus and Muslims, especially in the port towns of the west coast of India, where the Muslims were mostly of different origin from the Muslims of the inland sovereignties. In the careful reports of the well-informed traveller Ibn Baṭṭūṭa,<sup>62</sup> we encounter Arabs in most of these ports as traders or supervisors of trade. The zamorin of Calicut, though himself a Hindu, had the reputation of being specially favourable to Muslims, perhaps because he needed the services of Arabs as sailors and pilots for his considerable fleet of ships.<sup>63</sup>

Herein lies one of the ironies of histories. One of the main aims of Portuguese exploration was to circumvent the Muslim powers and to find new ways to Asia behind their backs. As it was succinctly expressed by one of the early voyagers, they came to find commerce and Christians. They did find Christians. But, having voyaged over countless leagues of sea to avoid the Muslims, they found in India Muslims far more numerous than Christians, and in most places installed in positions of far greater influence and power. Then, as now, the presence of Muslims proved one of the greatest obstacles to the penetration and extension of the Christian faith.

## 4 · Christians in the Indian Middle Age

### I TRAVEL-ROUTES TO INDIA

In our third chapter we have raised the question of intellectual contacts between India and the West, reckoning with the possibility of Indian influence on Western thought, and of the infiltration of Western art and philosophical thought into the Indian world. But little has been said about Christians resident in India, and about the conditions under which they lived. It appears that, about the year AD 800, Christians were a well established community in Kerala, though limited both in numbers and in the range of their operations, and still retaining something of a foreign impress though already long resident in India. When, at the beginning of the sixteenth century, the Portuguese began their exploration of the Indian world it was not long before they encountered this flourishing Christian community, prosperous and strong enough to exercise some influence on the affairs of the area in which it was settled. What had been happening to these Christian communities in the seven centuries which had elapsed between the period of earlier evidences and the beginning of the modern world?

It is to be regretted that there is remarkably little to record. With one possible exception, we have no single document from an Indian source in which notice is clearly taken of the existence of Christians. Again, with one doubtful exception, we have no knowledge of any Indian Christian having visited the west during this period.<sup>1</sup> For such information as we possess we are indebted to the chance remarks of Chinese and European travellers who reached India during these centuries; not all of these were accurate observers, and not all were specially interested in Christians.

Chinese pilgrims continued to enter the country in search of information about Buddhism past and contemporary. One of the latest of these was Khinie, more properly Ki-ye, of whom it is recorded that he was in India in AD 964 to 976, accompanied by three hundred monks despatched by the emperor to seek relics of the Buddha and Buddhist books. Trade between China and the east coast of India and Ceylon seems to have been continuous,

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and diplomatic missions in both directions were not unknown.<sup>2</sup>

To the west of India, the monopoly of the Arab seamen in the appropriately named Arabian sea was absolute and unchallenged. Arab travellers indicate that up to the eleventh century there was little Muslim penetration beyond the coastal areas of India. But R.H. Major seems to be stating the facts correctly, when he writes that 'whatever limits may be assigned to the advance of the Mohammedans into the interior of the country, it is certain that they obtained a monopoly of the Indian commerce, and a consequent enormous increase in wealth and prosperity'.<sup>3</sup>

In the Mediterranean the Muslim domination did not remain unchallenged. An important aspect of the emergence of Europe from the so-called Dark Ages was the increasing enterprise of the great Italian trading cities – Amalfi, Genoa, Pisa, Venice, and rather later Florence. As early as AD 840 Venice began to take rank as a commercial power. The prudent Italians found it better to co-operate with the Muslims than to fight them. The Italian cities had their streets of residence in the port towns of the Levant – Tripoli, Jaffa, and the rest, with appropriate commercial privileges attached – a pattern that was later to be extended to India by a number of European powers.

The eastern approaches, however, were well guarded. No Christian ships sailed the waters of the Red Sea – only one record has survived of a Christian traveller taking that sea-route from Egypt to India which had been so well known to the Greeks.<sup>4</sup> If travellers from Europe did make their way to India, they found it necessary to pursue the greater part of the journey by land.

The famous trade route across the immense stretches of Central Asia to China, though closed spasmodically by wars and rumours of wars, for the most part remained open. The fascinating work of Francis Balducci Pegolotti, the *Book of Descriptions of Countries*, written about 1340, gives the stages of the route from Astrakhan to Peking, the journey to be accomplished in rather less than a year, always supposing that no misfortunes befall the traveller by the way.<sup>5</sup> Of the conditions to be encountered on the road, Pegolotti writes encouragingly:

The road you travel from Tana<sup>6</sup> to Cathay is perfectly safe, whether by day or by night, according to what the merchants say who have used it. Only if the merchant, in going or coming, should die upon the road, everything belonging to him will become the perquisite of the lord of the country in which he dies, and the officers of the land will take possession of all.<sup>7</sup>

One other danger is to be feared; if the lord of the territory dies and his successor is not immediately appointed, disorder will break out during the interval:

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during such intervals there have sometimes been irregularities practised on the Franks and other foreigners . . . neither will the roads be safe to travel until the lord be proclaimed who is to reign in the room of him who is deceased.<sup>8</sup>

On this route, the traveller bound for India would go as far as Mosul or its neighbourhood and would then turn south, pursuing his way until he emerged on the Persian Gulf and could find a ship that would carry him directly to the west coast of India. This was, roughly, the way that Athanasius Nikitin took in 1468. Crossing the Caspian Sea to Astrakhan, he made his way to Baku, thence to Bokhara, south to Demavend in Persia, thence by way of Yezd and Bundar-Abbas to Ormuz, where he was able to ship his possessions and his horses in a hired vessel. The journey to Chaul, thirty miles south of Bombay, took six weeks.<sup>9</sup>

This sea journey was not very comfortable. But it must have been far preferable to the only other possibilities – the burning route along the coast of Baluchistan, on which the army of Alexander suffered so much as it made its way from India to Mesopotamia; and the route over the passes taken by the Chinese pilgrims, through dizzy heights of ice and snow. I have found no record of any European traveller taking either of these routes during the period under consideration.

### 2 AN INDIAN DOCUMENT

One Indian document exists which may be thought to contain a reference to Christians.

In one of the copper-plates, now in the possession of the Syrian Christians of Kerala, a king whose name is given as Virarāghava Chakkravarti conveyed to one Iravi-Korttan otherwise known as Ceramān-loka-pperum-jeṭṭi (the great merchant of the world ruled over by the Chera king), the title of Maṇigrāmam, together with a number of privileges. He commits to him the oilsellers and five classes of artisans as his servants. He also confers on him the brokerage of certain articles of merchandise, and the customs on such articles in a defined area of the city of Koṭuṅgaḷur (Cranganore). This grant is made not just to one individual but in perpetuity.<sup>10</sup>

The decipherment of the text has been so well done that there is little doubt that the meaning set forth in the available translations is correct. Everything else is uncertain.

The first doubt relates to the date of the inscription. One of the earlier interpreters assigned it to the year AD 230, and this is accepted by K.N. Daniel, who over a number of years has devoted intensive study to the copper-plates.<sup>11</sup> But Dr A.C. Burnell, no mean authority, reports that an

### *Clerical Travellers to India*

eminent Indian astronomer to whom he communicated the astronomical data in the inscription informed him that the only possible date is AD 774. This would bring the inscription into line with the probable dates of the other copper-plate inscriptions. A more recent editor Mr V. Venkayya, on palaeographical grounds and on the evidence of the purely Malayālam forms in the language of the inscription, has reached the conclusion that the plate cannot be dated earlier than AD 1300.<sup>12</sup>

Was Ravi-korṛaṇ. to give him a more correct form of his name, a Christian? Traditionally it has been supposed that he was. But even the first decipherer of the inscription, the missionary Dr H. Gundert, came to doubt this: 'I had indeed been startled by the Indian-looking name "Iravi-Corttan" which does not at all look like the appellation of a Syrian Christian, though from the time of Menezes (16th century), these grants had been regarded as given to the Syrian colonists.' Maṅṅrāmam has been supposed to be a kind of Christian principality; it now seems much more likely that it was a trading corporation, the rights and privileges of which were transferred by this copper-plate to a merchant named Iravi-Korttan. Most scholars are likely to agree with the verdict of Mr V. Venkayya: 'It is just possible that Ravi-korṛaṇ. was a Christian by religion. But his name and title give no clue in this direction, and there is nothing Christian in the document except its possession by its present owners.'<sup>13</sup>

So our one clue from an Indian source, tenuous as we had known it to be, seems in reality to be no clue at all; it is now seen to provide us with little or no evidence as to the status and condition of Christians in India, whether in the earlier or the later days of the medieval period.

### 3 CLERICAL TRAVELLERS TO INDIA

We are left with such evidence as can be gleaned from the writings of foreigners who in this period visited India, and may be thought to have made some contact with Christians.

As our first Christian witness we summon John of Monte Corvino. Born in 1247, somewhere in Italy but where is uncertain, John joined the Franciscan Order; and when already an experienced missionary was sent by the pope to China to make contact with the great Khan in Cambalec, the ancient name of Peking. There he was so successful that the pope appointed him as the first Latin archbishop of Peking with suffragans under him. This seems to have taken place in 1307. John died in or about 1328, being then more than eighty years of age, greatly beloved and respected by Christians and non-Christians alike.

In the course of his journey to China, travelling by the southern route, John of Monte Corvino was detained in India for thirteen months. It is

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greatly to be regretted that only two letters and a part of a third have been preserved.<sup>14</sup>

John was a good observer, at times with barbs to his pen. He implies that, of his exile of thirteen months in India, part if not the whole was spent in the neighbourhood of the place where the tomb of the apostle Thomas was to be found. His language is rather vague. He does not tell us who the Christians were to whom that church belonged, and does not define the nature of his relationship to them:

And I remained in the country of India, wherein stands the church of St Thomas the Apostle, for thirteen months, and in that region baptized in different places about one hundred persons. The companion of my journey was Friar Nicholas of Pistoia of the Order of Preachers, who died there, and was buried in the church aforesaid.<sup>15</sup>

Our other notices suggest that the Christians of the area, if indeed John was at Mylapore, were Nestorians. But it seems that his relations with them were friendly, and it may well be that the people he baptised were in fact Nestorian Christians. There is no reference to their having a priest of their own.

John's remark that 'hills there are few' (p. 61) makes it plain that he was not in the far south of the country, where the mountains can be clearly seen from the sea. The phrase is consistent with residence near the modern Madras, but would fit equally well with Ramnad or a similar area. Of the Indian people he writes on the whole kindly though noting with regret that they are idolaters. He has observed that Hindus do not, like Christians, follow regular hours of worship – 'they never join together in worship at any fixed hour, but each goes to worship when it pleases himself. And so they worship their idols in any part of their temples, either by day or by night.' In some respects his fastidious tastes are offended by their ways: 'for their daily food they use rice and a little milk; and they eat grossly like pigs, to wit, with the whole hand or fist and without a spoon. In fact, when they eat their food, they do look more like pigs than men' (p. 64). From this it can be inferred that John was not received in the houses of Indians of the higher classes; and he did not know that by eating with a spoon he would have offended them more than they could offend him by eating with their fingers.

Of Christians he has less to say than we could wish. There is only one further reference: 'In the regions by the sea there are many Saracens, and they have great influence; but there are few of them in the interior. There are a very few Christians, and Jews, and they are of little weight. The people persecute much the Christians, and all who bear Christian names' (p. 63).

Our next witness is Father Jordanus, a Dominican, who, though he wrote a book called *Mirabilia Descripta*,<sup>16</sup> is a sober and unemotional chronicler.

He is claimed by the Portuguese as a member of that nation, but this is not confirmed by any reliable evidence. Jordanus was in India in the years 1321 and 1322; we have two letters written by him from India in that period.

The first letter deals at some length with the martyrdom of four friars in Thāna, near Bombay, not long before the arrival of Jordanus at that place. Their names are given as Thomas of Tolentino in the March of Ancona, a venerable man who may have attained the age of seventy, James of Padua, Peter of Siena, and Demetrius a Georgian lay brother good at languages. Jordanus tells us little beyond the fact that he had been able to recover the bodies of the martyrs and to give them Christian burial; for fuller information we are dependent on a later and more romantic chronicler.

Jordanus writes somewhat optimistically of the possibilities of conversion in India. He tells us that he had baptised many persons in the city of Parocco (almost certainly Broach in Gujarāt), and another thirty-five in the neighbourhood.<sup>17</sup> Unfortunately he does not tell us how he managed to communicate with these believers. Nor does he tell us to what faith the converts had previously belonged. They may have been Nestorian Christians; such Christians, isolated and without the services of a priest, may in many cases have been glad to submit themselves to the authority of any priest who came along, and the Roman missionaries naturally had no hesitation in baptising those whom they regarded as heretics little better than unbelievers. Jordanus continues:

Let friars be getting ready to come, for there are three places I know where they might reap a great harvest and where they could live in common. One of them is Supera,<sup>18</sup> where two friars might be stationed; and a second is in the district of Parocco [Broach, *ut supra*] where two or three might abide; and the third is Columbus;<sup>19</sup> besides many others that I am not acquainted with.

In the second letter, after many complaints about his loneliness and his sufferings, including detraction by false brethren, he goes on to say that the reputation of the Latins stands very high, and that 'they are in continual expectation of the arrival of the Latins here, which they say is clearly predicted in their books'.<sup>20</sup>

In the *Mirabilia*, written probably a number of years after his sojourn in India, Jordanus gives us a little more information:

In this India there is a scattered people, one here, one there, who call themselves Christians but are not so, nor have they baptism nor do they know anything about the faith. Nay, they believe St Thomas the great to be the Christ.<sup>21</sup> There, in the India I speak of, I baptized and brought into the faith about three hundred souls, of whom many were idolaters and Saracens.<sup>22</sup>

Jordanus adds:

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Let me tell you that there among the idolaters a man may with safety expound the Word of the Lord; nor is anyone from among the idolaters hindered from being baptized throughout all the East, whether they be Tartars or Indians or what not.<sup>23</sup>

This statement of wide-spread toleration raises doubts as to the class of people with whom Jordanus had to do during his stay in India. Among high caste Hindus such toleration is unknown. He adds a prayer which sounds odd in modern ears: 'Pray for the pilgrim of Christ, all of you, that the Indian converts, black as they are, may be made white in soul before the good Jesus, through his pitiful grace.'<sup>24</sup>

In 1328 Jordanus was consecrated by the pope as bishop of Columbum, and provided with a letter to the head of the Nascarene (read 'Nasrani') Christians, commending the new bishop to them, and urging them to forsake heresy and to enter the unity of the true church.<sup>25</sup> It seems that Jordanus left Europe in 1330 with a view to returning to India; but there is no evidence that he ever reached his distant See or carried out any further work in India.

From the sobriety of Jordanus we turn with some scepticism to the florid tales of Odoric of Pordenone.<sup>26</sup> It must be said in defence of Odoric that his story as we have it was not written down by him, but dictated in old age and extreme feebleness to one Friar William of Solagna; imagination may have added something to his descriptions, and his amanuensis may have yielded at times to the allurements of medieval hagiographical style. Nevertheless without the good Odoric we should know even less than we do about this dark period in the Christian history of India.<sup>27</sup>

Odoric arrived in India in 1322 and betook himself to Thāna, where a year earlier the four friars had been put to death. He gives a lengthy and detailed account of this event, enriched by a number of marvels. As he was in touch with eyewitnesses and was able to talk with Nestorian Christians, members of the fifteen families which he states to have been resident in the town, there is no reason to doubt the essential veracity of his account.

The friars were called to bear witness before the *cadi* (Muslim judge) in a case involving a complaint by a woman against her husband. In the course of the hearing the *cadi* persistently asked Fr Thomas to express an opinion about the prophet Muhammad. At length, the friar, yielding to this importunity, delivered himself, as he is reported, of the following answer: 'I reply then, and tell you that Mahomet is the son of perdition, and hath his place in hell with the devil his father, and not he only but all such as follow him and keep his law, false as it is, and pestilent and accursed, hostile to God and the salvation of souls.'

It is not necessary to suppose that we have the exact words spoken by the friar. But, if he spoke even remotely according to the tenor of these words,



## *A Lay Witness*

he must have known that he was condemning himself and his companions irrevocably to death. No further proceedings seem to have been judged necessary, and the friars were led out to die. After various unsuccessful attempts had been made to destroy them, the *cadi* sent four armed men to finish off the job; the messengers carried out the injunction laid upon them and three friars were beheaded. The fourth, Peter, who had been left behind in the house, was then apprehended, and after he had endured various torments throughout the day, was finally at nightfall slain with the sword.<sup>28</sup>

Jordanus tells us that, having recovered the bodies of the martyrs, with the help of a young Genoese whom he found at Thāna he took them to Supera, and buried them in a church as honourably as he could. The expansive Odoric, without mentioning Jordanus, simply remarks, ‘having heard of their glorious martyrdom, and opening their tombs I humbly and devoutly took up their bones’ – which he then proceeded to carry off to China.<sup>29</sup>

On his travels Odoric stopped at Quilon, which he oddly calls Polumbum, but he has disappointingly little to tell us about Christians. He mentions two cities, Flandrina, which may be identical with Pandarani north of Calicut, and Cyngilin, which can hardly be other than Cranganore. In Flandrina some of the inhabitants are Jews and some are Christians, ‘and between these two cities there is always internal war, but the result is always that the Christians beat and overcome the Jews’.<sup>30</sup>

Some of the observations of Odoric on the customs of the country, such as *saṭī*, are accurate and valuable. But of Christians he has only one further notice. In the region called Mobar, he found the place where the body of the blessed Thomas the Apostle is buried. ‘His church is filled with idols, and beside it are fifteen houses of the Nestorians, that is to say Christians but vile and pestilent heretics.’<sup>31</sup> From this point on the recollections of Odoric deal with the Far East, and he has no more to tell us about India.

### 4 A LAY WITNESS

Following our clerical travellers we have moved forward into the fourteenth century; but we must now retrace our steps to make the acquaintance of the most important of all our lay witnesses, Ser Marco Polo.<sup>32</sup>

After long years spent in China Marco Polo returned to Europe by way of India, in which he travelled extensively at some period between the years 1292 and 1295. Though excellent as an observer, Polo was unsystematic in his recording, and his ideas of geography were somewhat hazy; it is not always easy to follow the course of his wanderings, and he has less to tell us than we might have hoped about Christians encountered in India.

Polo arrived in India from Ceylon, and first reached the ‘great province of

Maabar, which is styled India the Greater; it is the best of all the Indies and is on the mainland'.<sup>33</sup>

Maabar appears to be an Arabic word *ma'bar* signifying 'passage' or 'ferry'. It may well refer to the 'Bridge', that point at which Ceylon approaches most closely to India, the distance between the two being no more than twenty-two miles. Later, the term was used in reference to a much wider region, Cape Comorin being named as the point at which Malabar ends and Ma'bar begins, and the whole coastal area as far as Nellore being included.<sup>34</sup>

There may also have been confusion with the word *Maravar*, the caste name of a vigorous and warlike people, whose descendants can be found today all over the southern part of the Tamil country. Some colour is lent to this view by the name of the local ruler as given by Marco Polo, Sonder Bandi Davar, in which it is not difficult to recognise Sundara Paṇḍi Thevar. Sundaram, the beautiful one, is a name borne by many Indian rulers. Paṇḍiyan was the title of the ruler of the southernmost of the three great Dravidian kingdoms. Thevar is the honorific title used to this day by members of the Marava community. It is, however, impossible to identify the ruler to whom Polo is referring in this passage.

He follows up this notice with a remarkably accurate account of the pearl-fishery, which is still carried on much as he described it along the coast between Vembār and Tuticorin. The reference to 'the best of all the Indies' remains perplexing. If Polo came to India by way of the 'Bridge', the barren landscape with groups of palmyras and some stunted palms but little cultivation hardly suggests to the traveller that he is entering a land of abundant plenty. Some modern commentators suggest that Polo has made a jump in his recollections, and that he is referring to the kingdom of Thānjāvur (Tanjore), well-watered and prosperous even in the days before the Mettur dam and the wonders of modern irrigation.<sup>35</sup>

Book III chapter 18 of Polo's narrative is entitled 'Discoursing of the place where lieth the body of St Thomas the Apostle and of the Miracles thereof.' The body of St Thomas lies, we are told, 'in the province of Maabar at a certain little town having no great population; 'tis a place where few traders go, because there is very little merchandize to be got there, and it is a place not very accessible. Both Christians and Saracens, however, greatly frequent it in pilgrimage.'<sup>36</sup> This note is more remarkable for its omissions than for what it actually tells us. The writer does not give us the name of the place where the Apostle lies buried; no indication of its location other than that it is in the province of Maabar; no clue to the route which he followed when he visited it; no statement as to Christians living in the neighbourhood or as to their number; no indication as to who the Christians were who came on pilgrimage or whence they came; no information as to

why the Muslims also came on pilgrimage to the spot. These many lacunae have led some critics to doubt whether Polo was ever anywhere near the site of the alleged tomb of the Apostle, and whether any credence can be granted to his narrative at this point. But such extreme scepticism can hardly be defended. The fame of Madras in later days naturally leads the modern reader to suppose that this strip of coastline was always a busy centre of trade; in point of fact, until the British acquired Madraspatnam from the local ruler, it was no more than an insignificant hamlet, and may well have been so at the end of the thirteenth century.

Marco Polo goes on to give us the interesting information that 'Christians who go thither on pilgrimage take of the earth of that place where the Saint was killed, and give a portion thereof to anyone who is sick of a quartan or tertian fever; and by the power of God and of St Thomas the sick man is incontinently cured. The earth, I should tell you, is red.'<sup>37</sup> Similar practices are reported from other areas; but this is a detail which Polo is not likely to have invented. This prosaic statement is followed by a highly picturesque and legendary account of the manner in which the saint met his death.

Chapter 22 of the same book tells us about the kingdom of Coilum. Doubts have been raised as to the identity of this city, but there seems no reason to doubt that it is that Kollam (Quilon), with which we have become familiar in other sources, and of which the Arabian traveller Ibn Baṭṭūṭa records that it was 'one of the finest in Malabar, with splendid markets and rich merchants, and was the chief resort of the Chinese traders in India'.<sup>38</sup>

Once again Marco Polo gives evidence of his accuracy as observer. He tells us of the inhabitants of the region that 'corn they have none but rice. So also their wine they make from palm sugar, capital drink it is, and speedily it makes a man drunk.' Now, as then, toddy made from the sweet juice of the coco-nut palm is speedy in its action.<sup>39</sup> But of the religion of the people he has no more to say than that 'the people are idolaters, but there are also some Christians and some Jews. The natives have a language of their own, and a king of their own and are tributary to no one.'<sup>40</sup> At that time the Malayālam language was hardly distinguishable from Tamil. It is just possible that Marco Polo had heard of the persistence of Syriac as the liturgical language of the Christians of the area. He is correct in stating that Quilon was an independent kingdom; at the time of writing it was one of the petty principalities which were later absorbed into the kingdom of Travancore.

On one other point Marco Polo gives us information of considerable interest and accuracy. We have found evidence of great commercial activity, over many centuries, in the Red Sea, the Persian Gulf, the Bay of Bengal and as far away as China. But why did none of these hardy and intrepid seamen ever turn the Cape of Good Hope and emerge upon the Atlantic Ocean? Marco Polo gives us the reason: 'Madagascar is an Island towards the south

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about a thousand miles from Socotra . . . You must know that this Island lies so far south that ships cannot go further south or visit other Islands in that direction except this one.<sup>41</sup> There is considerable evidence of Arab settlement and colonisation in Madagascar, but good reason for the Arabs regarding it as the farthest limit of the navigable world. If a man were to sail south from Madagascar, he would meet neither coast nor island until he reached the frozen continent of Antarctica; if any Arab mariner ventured the journey, it is unlikely that he returned to tell the tale.<sup>42</sup> There was a further reason. And here once more Marco Polo's evidence is surprisingly accurate: 'The sea-current runs so strong to the south that the ships which should attempt it never would get back again. Indeed the ships of Maabar which visit this Island of Madagascar arrive there with marvellous speed, for great as the distance is they accomplish it in 20 days, whilst the return voyage takes them more than three months.'<sup>43</sup> This, he continues, is because of the strong current running south, which continues with singular force and in the same direction at all seasons.

The seas off the south-east coast of Africa are among the most dangerous and unpredictable in the world. A ship encountering a south-west gale may suddenly find itself falling into what has been vividly described as a hole in the sea. This may happen with disastrous results even to large ships and in modern times. In 1973 the 12,000 ton S.S. *Neptune Sapphire*, on her maiden voyage, encountered one of these freak waves, and was literally broken in two by the impact. One of the unsolved mysteries of the sea is the total disappearance of the 9,000 ton liner *Waratah* in a south-west gale in 1901. No trace of the ship has ever been found; it is probable that she was literally swallowed up by one of these unpredictable holes in the sea.

The Moçambique current flows down the east coast of Africa between Madagascar and the continent. Off Cape Agulhas it becomes the Agulhas current and changes direction, turning to flow south-eastwards. The speed of the current may be as much as five knots, so that a ship may drift with the current even against the wind. Seamen tend to dread currents even more than storms. If the Arab mariners had heard rumours of disasters of the kind that can befall ships even in the twentieth century, it is not surprising that they had a healthy dread of these southern waters, and that the Atlantic remained inaccessible to sailors from the east, until the ships of the Portuguese at the beginning of the sixteenth century managed to overcome the difficulties, though still with a heavy price in shipwrecks.<sup>44</sup>

### 5 LATER MEDIEVAL TRAVELLERS

Our next witness is perhaps the oddest of all. John of Marignolli was born in or near Florence somewhere about the year 1290; and, having joined the

Franciscan Order, was sent by the pope in 1338 on a mission to the Great Khan. The embassy spent a number of years on its travels and in Peking. At last in 1347 John was able to leave China and to spend about a year in India on his way home. In 1353 he reached Avignon and made his report to the pope, who rewarded him with the small bishopric of Bisignano. In 1355 he was carried off by the emperor Charles IV to Prague. Here the Italian bishop was set to the endlessly tedious task of writing up the Chronicles of Bohemia, thus becoming involved in 'thorny thickets and tangled brakes', and in a 'labyrinthine jungle of strange names, the very utterance of which was an impossibility to his Florentine tongue'.<sup>45</sup> To relieve the dreariness of his days, Marignolli hit upon the idea of inserting into his narrative confused notes, in no particular order, of his experiences during his long years of Asian travel. For four centuries this dull manuscript slept undisturbed, until in 1768 it was printed; even then no one noticed the hidden treasures which it contained. At last in 1820 a Mr J.G. Meinert performed the service of extracting the passages relevant to eastern travel and arranging them in some sort of orderly and continuous narrative. From that time on Marignolli's notes have been included in our exiguous sources for the history of Christianity in medieval India.<sup>46</sup>

Like so many of our travellers Marignolli wrote down less than he knew. Moreover, he seems to have been, when he wrote, already an old man, not very clear in the head and not very skilled with the pen. But his first statement on his residence in India is so important that it must be cited at some length:

And sailing on the feast of St Stephen [Dec. 26] we navigated the Indian Sea until Palm Sunday, and then arrived at a very noble city of India called Columbum, where the whole world's pepper is produced. Now this pepper grows on a kind of vines, which are planted just like in our vineyards . . . And there is no roasting of the pepper as authors have falsely asserted . . . nor are the Saracens the proprietors, but the Christians of St Thomas. And these latter are the masters of the public steelyard, from which I derived, as a perquisite of my office as Pope's legate, every month a hundred gold *fan*, and a thousand when I left.

There is a church of St George there, of the Latin communion, at which I dwelt. And I adorned it with fine paintings and taught there the holy law.<sup>47</sup>

Marignolli goes on to say that he set up a marble pillar with inscriptions both in Latin and Indian characters; he consecrated and blessed it in the presence of an infinite multitude of people, 'and I was carried on the shoulders of the chiefs in a litter or palanquin like Solomon's'.<sup>48</sup>

Parts of the narrative are quite clear. Columbum is evidently Quilon, one of the great centres of the pepper trade. The references to the Thomas Christians are fully in line with what we have already learned of their

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situation in earlier times, as a stable and prosperous commercial community having almost a monopoly of the trade in pepper. The vanity evident in Marignolli's references to his pillar is in keeping with his character as he reveals it in other contexts in his work.

But what does he mean, when he refers to himself as the pope's legate? And what is the Church of St George of the Latin rite?

Some have supposed this to be a church founded by Jordanus. But Marignolli nowhere refers to predecessors who had come to that place from the west. Others have taken it to be a church founded by Genoese or Venetian traders. But we have no evidence from which to infer the presence of a considerable number of Levantine merchants in that area at that time. Even if Marignolli's memory was failing, he could hardly be mistaken about a place in which he claims to have resided for sixteen months. The most probable, but still uncertain, conjecture is that the Thomas Christians were so delighted to have among them an educated priest from the West that they took him in as one of their own, and allowed him to celebrate according to his own rite, not having any clear idea as to who the pope might be or of any change in ecclesiastical relationships in which they might be involving themselves. Hearing that he came from a great potentate in Europe far away, they may have thought that he could be useful to them in negotiations with the local ruler with a view to the safeguarding of their rights and privileges. Clearly Marignolli enjoyed his time with them, and they may well have been equally content with him.

Marignolli records one curious incident from his time in India. A man of majestic stature, naked from the loins upward and wearing a knotted cord like the stole of a deacon (the sacred thread of the Brāhman), came into his presence, and reported having received a divine revelation, bidding him to proceed 'to Columbum, a distance of two years' voyage by sea, and there shalt thou find the messenger of God, who will teach thee the way of salvation'. Marignolli's interpreter, a young man who had been captured by pirates and sold by them to a German merchant, and who had been baptised while in captivity, recognised in the venerable ascetic his own father. After three months' Christian instruction, the old man was baptised under the name Michael, and sent away with a blessing, promising to proclaim to others the faith by which he had been saved.<sup>49</sup>

Sir Henry Yule doubts the story from beginning to end, and thinks that 'in fact it looks as if the whole thing was got up as a trick, in the spirit of those which the Duke and Duchess played on Don Quixote'.<sup>50</sup> So radical a scepticism is not necessary. Probably the old man, like the Gibeonites in the book of Joshua, did not come from as far away as he said he did. But he may well have found in the teaching imparted to him by his Christian son the promise of a new way of life, and deliverance from the endless round of

### Later Medieval Travellers

austerities to which he was committed in his devotion as a Hindu.

Two more witnesses from the fifteenth century must occupy our attention very briefly.

Nicolò Conti was a Venetian of noble family, who had resided in Damascus and learned Arabic, and then set out on a long series of journeys which took him to many parts of India, to Ceylon and to Sumatra. He returned to Europe by way of Ethiopia and Egypt, and at last reached home in 1444 after twenty-five years of absence. During his travels he had apostatised and become a Muslim 'not so much from fear of death to himself as from the danger which threatened his wife and children who accompanied him'. He threw himself on the mercy of Pope Eugenius IV in Florence and was reconciled, but was ordered as penance to recount his travels to the scholar Poggio Bracciolini (1380-1459). Poggio in due course included the narrative in the first book of his *De Varietate Fortunae*; this was published in Paris in 1723, and first appeared in English dress in 1857.<sup>51</sup> Nicolò gives a fuller account of what he had seen in India than any other of our medieval travellers. He makes, for instance, the interesting remark that in Calicut 'the women are allowed to take several husbands, so that some have ten or more . . . The children are allotted to the husband at the will of the wife. The inheritance of the father does not descend to the children but to the grandchildren' (perhaps rather 'nephews').<sup>52</sup> Polyandry is certainly a very ancient custom in India – Draupadī in the *Mahābhārata* was the wife of all the five Pāṇḍava brothers – and survives among the Todas in the Nīlgiri hills. It undoubtedly existed in past times among the Nāyars of Kerala. Nicolò seems to have been describing what he saw; but like many later observers he may have been perplexed by the *marumakkattāyam* custom of marriage, which still prevails among the Nāyars of Malabar and Kerala, and being matrilineal is remarkably different from those systems of marriage which exist in patrilineal societies.

As with our other witnesses, we have to regret that Nicolò has so little to say about Christians. He did encounter them in a

maritime city which is named Malepur, situated in the Second Gulf beyond the Indus. Here the body of St Thomas lies honourably buried in a very large and beautiful church; it is worshipped by heretics, who are called Nestorians, and inhabit this city to the number of a thousand. These Nestorians are scattered over all India, in like manner as are the Jews among us. All this province is called Malabar.<sup>53</sup>

Beyond this he has nothing to say about Christians.<sup>54</sup>

At this point Russia, destined at a later date to have so fateful an influence on the affairs of India, appears for the first time in our narrative. A young man

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named Athanasius Nikitin, a citizen of Tver, set out on his travels in 1468, passed through Persia, spent some time in India and returned to Russia in 1474; he appears to have died in the neighbourhood of Smolensk before reaching his native city Tver. His narrative of his doings was first published in Russian in 1821, and translated into English for R.H. Major in 1855.<sup>55</sup> The translator accurately sums up the contents of this brief narrative:

Athanasius Nikitin, a citizen of Tver, visited, about the year 1470, the kingdoms of the Deccan and of Golconda, for purposes of commerce. We possess his diary, which although it does not evince any remarkable power of observation, or any great amount of knowledge, still must be considered a curiosity, the more so as the state of India at that time is imperfectly known.<sup>56</sup>

The translator adds that 'A staunch and zealous devotee, he never failed to keep the great festivals of the Greek-Russian Church, although he had no books of devotion to guide him.'<sup>57</sup> But this does not fit in with the evidence of the diary itself. Nikitin records two separate attempts of Muslims to convert him to their faith, each of which he resisted. But he also writes, 'I forgot the Christian faith and the Christian festivals, and knew not Easter nor Christmas, nor can I tell Wednesday from Friday, and I am between the two faiths' (p. 18). Again, 'I have already passed the fourth great day [Easter] in the Mussulman country, and have not renounced Christianity. But what may come hereafter God alone knows. Lord, my God, in thee is my hope, save me, O Lord my God!' (p. 23). He also tells us 'on my return to Russia I again adopted the Russian law' (p. 19). What Nikitin writes is never entirely clear. It seems probable, however, that even if he did not formally renounce Christianity, he went far in the direction of adapting himself to local custom and usage, so far indeed as to have adopted a Muslim name, Khoza Issuf Khorossani (p. 15). For this reason, perhaps, he warns faithful Christians that 'he that travels through many countries will fall into many sins, and deprive himself of the Christian faith' (p. 22).<sup>58</sup>

Nikitin seems never to have met Christians in India; if he did so, he makes no mention of them. He does, however, make it clear that it was possible for a European Christian to spend a considerable time in the India of the fifteenth century and to maintain himself; indicating at the same time that such a European was liable to be subjected to considerable pressures to change his faith and to become a Muslim.

Hieronimo di Santo Stefano, a merchant of Genoa who was in India in 1497, tells us that in the city of Calicut 'there are as many as a thousand houses inhabited by Christians, and the district is called Upper India'. But he gives us no details; it is unlikely that he was ever there, and he seems to have confused the information which had come to him by word of mouth.<sup>59</sup>



One Arab writer may be cited as giving evidence of Christians in India different from any that we have so far encountered. Abd-er-Razzak was in India in 1442 and 1443. He gives us much first-hand information about the great city of Vijayanagar at the height of its splendour. He writes of it that it 'is such that the pupil of the eye has never seen a place like it, and the ear of intelligence has never been informed that there existed anything to equal it in the world' (p. 23). His own experiences were distressing, owing to the hostility of a Christian named Nimeh-Pezir, whom the king had admitted to his councils. This man 'thought himself equal to a vizier; he was a creature of small stature, malicious, ill-born, mean, and stern. All the most odious vices were united in him, without one finding in him any counterbalancing estimable quality.' This less than admirable representative of the Christian cause had listened to 'the men of Ormuz', who had persuaded him that Abd-er-Razzak was not an ambassador sent by 'his majesty the happy Khakan', but merely a postman, charged with the delivery of a letter to the king of Vijayanagar.<sup>60</sup>

From Abd-er-Razzak's Arabic transliteration of the name Nimeh-Pezir, it is impossible to reach any certainty as to who this Christian was, or whence he came. It is possible that he was an Armenian. There had been contacts between India and Armenia from a very early date, and when, in the sixteenth century, our sources become richer, we find Armenians established in many parts of the country.<sup>61</sup> It is interesting to find that a Christian could attain a position of some influence in so orthodox a Hindu kingdom as that of Vijayanagar. We may also think that this particular Christian may not have been so wholly evil as he has been depicted by the pen of envy and resentment.<sup>62</sup>

## 6 THE TWO ENDS OF A CHAIN

The gleanings of six centuries have proved neither numerous nor illuminating. Further records may yet come to light, disinterred by busy antiquaries working in long-forgotten libraries in the West. India itself may yield some further particulars. What little we have has confirmed the view expressed earlier in this chapter that, though through these long centuries India was almost wholly cut off from the West, the separation was never complete. Hardy souls – merchants in search of gain, travellers impelled only by motives of curiosity, missionaries on their way to or from the Far East – did make their hazardous way to India, and succeeded in living there over a period of months or years. Those who left no record of their travels were doubtless far more numerous than those who did, and the records

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which have perished must have been far more extensive than those which have survived. But out of it all emerges the fact that Europe never quite forgot that there were Christians in India. Sectarian animosity had blinded the eyes of the travellers to much that was of interest. They failed to appreciate the tenacity which had kept alight through the centuries at least some vestige of Christian faith, under conditions which might well have quenched it long before. But to some at least in Europe the facts became known; Christians there were in that far away country; there had persisted at least some rudimentary Christian faith, which, when better days should come and perhaps with help from the Western brethren, might be quickened into a living flame.

Christians, then, were to be found in many regions of India, but in most areas in inconsiderable numbers. They were a poor and feeble folk, and of little social consequence.

There was a persistent tradition among the people who called themselves Thomas Christians, and perhaps not only among them, that the Apostle Thomas himself was the founder of their church. The place of his martyrdom was shewn at Mylapore in the neighbourhood of Madras; in the course of years many legends had grown up about the place and about the event.

In Kerala there were large and settled communities. These were engaged in the pepper trade, and were in the enjoyment of some of the amenities provided by wealth and of privileges granted to them by the local rulers.

All the Christians of whom we have record appear to have been Nestorians, and no doubt maintained a shadowy connection with the patriarch of Babylon. But in our sources there is hardly so much as a reference to bishops or priests, or to regular worship among these Christians. If they had any knowledge of the western world, this is not likely to have included any idea that the bishop of Rome claimed to be the head of all Christians everywhere. Only when the Roman Catholic missionaries arrived at the beginning of the sixteenth century did they learn that they were classed as heretics by the greater part of the Christian world.

So much for the religious aspect of contacts between India and the western world. One further narrative demands attention, as a link between that medieval world which at the end of the fifteenth century was just about to pass away and that modern world which was just about to be born.

We do not know when or how the idea that the circumnavigation of Africa should be possible entered the mind of the king of Portugal. There may have been Moorish traditions indicating that Africa was wholly or almost wholly surrounded by water. But it is certain that the king was somehow led to entertain the idea, and that he set himself to obtain information from the

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Indian end. In 1487<sup>63</sup> two Portuguese gentlemen, Affonso de Payra and Pedro Covilham, both skilled in the Arabic language, were despatched by royal authority on a voyage of discovery to the East. Their instructions were to search out the country of Prester John (Prete Janni); to trace to its source the traffic in drugs and spices of which Venice was the centre; to ascertain whether it was possible for ships to sail round the southern extremity of Africa; to make their way to India, and to acquire detailed information as to the possibilities of this navigation.

The travellers set forth in May 1487. Having made their way successfully to Aden they separated, Payra making for Suakin and the Red Sea and Covilham for India. The ship on which Covilham sailed reached the coast of India at Cannanore. After a stay of some days at that port, he went on to Calicut and Goa, thus becoming, as it is believed, the first European to sail the waters of the Indian ocean since the Arabs obtained domination of those seas. Returning to Cairo, he met with messengers of King John of Portugal, who instructed him to turn his steps to Ethiopia, now identified as the kingdom of Prester John. This he was ready and eager to do. But first he sent to the king a long account of his travels up to that date, an account which contains the notable words: 'That the ships which sailed down the coast of Guinea might be sure of reaching the termination of the continent by persisting in a course to the south; and that when they should arrive in the eastern ocean, their best direction must be to inquire for Sofala, and the Island of the Moon (Madagascar).'

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The later history of Covilham was worthy of its romantic beginnings. Obedient to the commands of his king, he entered Ethiopia, was kindly received by the emperor, and taken by him to his capital. He was accepted into the imperial service and enjoyed a good deal of the confidence of the ruler. But he was never allowed to leave the country, and was destined to spend the next thirty-three years in what was in fact honourable and luxurious captivity. He managed to communicate from time to time with the Portuguese court, and was an invaluable source of information as to the realities of the kingdom of Prester John, so different from the vivid and splendid imaginations of the middle ages. At last, in 1525, he was able to see again the faces of fellow-countrymen, when a Portuguese embassy reached the court of Ethiopia; but his captivity ended only with his death. By that time the vision of Portuguese domination of the Asian seas and of the safeguarding of the ocean route to India had been transformed from dream into reality.<sup>65</sup>

In 1490 the contacts of Portugal with India could be represented by the two ends of a chain. The ends were now well known; what lay between had yet to be discovered. This was a task that was to call for endless fortitude, persistence and the spirit of adventure. But the die had already been cast.

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Asia and Europe were to be brought into permanent relationships of exchange and mutual knowledge, such as had been known in no previous epoch of the world's history. Since the king of Portugal had already received from the pope a special commission to attend to the interests of the Christian faith in the eastern lands, commerce and Christians could not but be intimately associated with one another. To the Indian cynic, the missionary work of the Christian churches appears only as one further form of unscrupulous European aggression in eastern lands; the Christian of the sixteenth century could not regard it as other than a natural and necessary accompaniment of every European enterprise in Asia.

## PART TWO

# 5 · Europe and Asia; Contact and Conflict

### I THE WEST APPROACHES THE EAST

On 17 May 1498 the three small ships of Vasco da Gama cast anchor off a small village about eight miles (13 km) north of Calicut on the south-west coast of India. On 21 April 1526 Bābur the Tīmūrīd at the first battle of Pānīpat overthrew the armies of Ibrāhīm Shāh Lodī, the Afghan ruler of Delhi, and brought that Muslim kingdom to an end. These two events changed the face of the world, and left an indelible impress on the destinies of India.

The expansion of Portugal, both to Asia and the East and to America and the West, can be summed up under the headings Crusade, Curiosity, Commerce, Conversion, Conquest and Colonisation, in that order. Though the exploits of many outstanding men have to be recorded in this chronicle, all these facets of late medieval and early renaissance thought combine in the character of one great central figure, Prince Henry the Navigator (1394–1460), the third son of King John I.

The age of the great crusades in the Levant was over. But the idea of a continuing *crusade* against the Muslim was still in the minds of many men. The first assault, made to give employment to unemployed soldiers, to satisfy the chivalrous ideas of the king's sons, to check piracy, and to continue the crusade against the Muslims,<sup>1</sup> resulted in the capture of Ceuta on 21 August 1415. This, together with a second assault in 1418 at which Prince Henry was personally present, for the moment slaked his crusading ardour. But information received at this time as to the *commerce* carried on from the northern coast of Africa across the Sahara to Guinea, and as to the gold which flowed back from that area, seems to have suggested to him that this was a line of exploration to be followed up, and that direct contact with the Guinea coast might result in an increase in the supply of much-needed gold to the court of Portugal. The rediscovery by his captains of Porto Santo and Madeira and later of the Azores, and the settlement of these islands with practical and efficient farmers, is a good example of sensible *colonisation* of uninhabited lands, and may suggest that Prince Henry was already thinking of that approach to India across the western ocean which led in 1492 to the

most famous of all voyages and to the discovery of the Caribbean Islands by Christopher Columbus.

The Navigator seems to have been endowed with no less a share of *curiosity* than more ordinary mortals. With so large an unknown world to explore, and with new means at hand for the exploration of it, it is not surprising that the prince became one of the greatest patrons of explorers that the world has ever known. It does not appear that he ever navigated himself; yet his title 'the Navigator' was more than fully deserved.

Sea-travel five hundred years ago was both uncomfortable and dangerous.<sup>2</sup> To the ever-present danger of shipwreck, and to that total ignorance of the most elementary rules of sanitation which brought about innumerable fevers and other easily avoidable diseases, long sea voyages added the new disaster of scurvy, a deficiency disease caused by lack of vitamin C in diet, and easily cured by the provision of fresh vegetables or fruit. Neither the cause nor the cure of this dread disease was known in the sixteenth century; it was not till 1795 that the British navy stamped out scurvy by the regular provision of lime-juice for its sailors. On ocean voyages in this period and much later the death-rate was extremely high. It is important, however, not to exaggerate the debility of those who survived, or the poverty of the impression made by them on those who saw them land. Shipwrecked sailors, of course, if they survived at all, made land in conditions of extreme destitution. But officers on the ships maintained considerable state, the admiral or commander dining alone in his cabin from silver plate; and even the ordinary seaman, with the usual thrifty care of sailors, managed to keep safe one decent set of shore-going apparel for use when at last the voyage came to an end.

When Vasco da Gama made his first landfall in South Africa, as the author of the *Roteiro* records, 'we then drew near to one another, and having put on our gala clothes, we saluted the captain-major by firing off bombards, and dressed the ships with flags and standards'. On reaching Calicut, on 28 May 1498, 'the captain-major landed with thirteen men, of whom I was one. We put on our best attire, placed bombards in our boats, and took with us trumpets and many flags.'<sup>3</sup>

## 2 THE PORTUGUESE ARRIVE IN INDIA

Henry the Navigator early recognised the part that accurate knowledge must play in the exploration of the world. Himself a student, he gathered round him in his retreat at Sagres learned men to help him. It is too much to say that he planned there a kind of academy of mathematics and astronomy. But he himself chose the pilots for his expeditions and arranged to have them trained for their work; and most important of all he brought from

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Mallorca one Master Jerome, a Jew and an expert cartographer, to teach the Portuguese how to make maps. Already by the end of the fifteenth century some surprisingly accurate maps of parts of the African continent had been produced; by the end of the sixteenth there was a goodly supply of maps, charts and portolans to help the navigator in his difficult art.<sup>4</sup>

Even with the royal and practical patronage of Prince Henry the exploration of the African coast advanced very slowly. Cape Bojador, just south of latitude 27°N, which on modern maps appears as no more than an insignificant promontory, appeared to sixteenth-century mariners as an impassable obstacle; it was held that beyond it was nothing but what the Arab geographers called 'the green Sea of Darkness', and that for those who advanced so far there would be no possibility of return!<sup>5</sup>

One record has been preserved of an earlier attempt to round the cape and to proceed further south. It is reported that in the year 1291 Tedisio Doria and Ugolino de Vivaldo with his brother and certain other citizens of Genoa, accompanied by two friars minor, made a venture which none had in any way attempted before them – that they might go by sea to the ports of India, and bring back useful articles of merchandise. Since they passed a place called Gozora no certain news had been received of them; thirty years later what had become of them remained completely unknown.<sup>6</sup>

In 1434 Gil Eannes gave the cape a wide berth, sailed far out into the Atlantic, turned south, and found that he had rounded the cape without knowing that he had done so.<sup>7</sup> The sailors did not fall off the edge of the world, as had been expected, and returned to tell the tale. There were still difficulties to be encountered. There were few good harbours and estuaries in which sailors could careen and clean their ships. Supplies of fresh water were uncertain. Friendliness on the part of the local inhabitants could not be counted on; and it seemed that in these southern latitudes the explorers would never encounter another sea-going ship.

Progress was slow; but at last in 1487 Bartholomew Dias demonstrated once for all that the ocean route to India did exist and was open to ships from Europe. He made a number of discoveries. First he showed that ships, instead of hugging the African coast, could better sail far out into the Atlantic, and then turn south and sail until at last the favouring south-westerly winds could be picked up. This became the regular route for ships from Europe until the very end of the period of sail. The danger was that the pilot might not turn south soon enough, and might find himself running into the coast of Brazil instead of heading for the southern seas.<sup>8</sup>

Dias avoided these dangers, and actually sailed past the southern tip of Africa without knowing that he had done so. He pursued his journey as far as the Great Fish River, and could have gone further had not the homesickness of his men and their unwillingness to journey further into the

unknown made it advisable for him to turn back. But the water which he encountered at the furthest point of his voyage was *warm*, and this offered corroboration of his view that the way to India now lay open. On his way back he saw for the first time the great mountain, and the cape to which he gave the name 'the Cape of Storms'; it is said that it was King John II who decided that the cape should be known by the name which ever since it has borne, 'the Cape of Good Hope'.

At some point or other in time the Portuguese realised that, if the sea-route to India could be found, it would be possible to cut into the spice-trade at its source and to transfer to Christian pockets the wealth which had for so long flowed into the coffers of the Muslims. Western merchants had long groaned under the burden of the innumerable tolls and imposts which were levied on spices on their long journey from the eastern lands to markets in Europe.<sup>9</sup> The value of pepper in Europe was so high that, even with all these exactions, the profit reaped by the merchants was considerable. But it was self-evident that, if the demands of grasping rulers and exorbitant middlemen could be eliminated, more regular supplies could be expected and prices could be lowered, yet the profits to be drawn by the king of Portugal and the merchants would be unassailed.

In 1488 Bartholomew Dias had made it plain that the sea-way to India lay open. Yet for almost ten years nothing was done to follow up his discoveries. At last the king made up his mind to take the final and decisive step. This was to be a royal venture, and not, like the voyages of the English and Dutch, an enterprise of a company of merchant adventurers. The choice of a commander was prudently made. Vasco da Gama was about thirty-seven years of age, and did not lack experience of sea voyages. He possessed the qualities of decisiveness required in a leader, and his personal gifts were such as to secure for him throughout this long and dangerous voyage the devotion and loyalty of the men whom he commanded. Care had been taken also in the selection of the crews for the four ships chosen for the voyage, and there were among them a number of men who had already had experience of African voyages. Among those who sailed were two priests, one of whom seems to have died during the voyage.

We are fortunate in having a first-hand and on the whole reliable account of the voyage in the *Roteiro da Viagem de Vasco da Gama*, which though not from the hand of da Gama himself, must have been written by one of his companions.<sup>10</sup>

The first part of the voyage of da Gama followed the by now familiar course through the islands. He then turned far out into the Atlantic, and made his turn and calculated his landfall so successfully that, on the ninety-third day after leaving the island of São Thiago land was sighted, probably



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in about latitude 30°S (4 November 1497). Then followed a tedious time of beating against winds and currents but at last contact with civilisation was renewed at Moçambique on 2 March 1498.<sup>11</sup> Here the Arabs were well established as traders; but, having perhaps already an inkling of the imperialistic designs of the Portuguese, they gave no welcome to the intruders. Until the explorers reached the small port of Malindi, they were unable to secure the services of a pilot.

At Malindi the luck changed. The Portuguese met four ships belonging to 'Indian Christians'.<sup>12</sup> Before many days had passed, they were provided with a 'Christian' pilot, in fact a Gujarāti, with whom they were much pleased, and who on the twenty-fourth day out from Malindi brought them safely to journey's end. On 18 May 1498 land was in sight; the Portuguese, having reached the coast of India by the sea-route, cast anchor not far from Calicut, the very city which they had been seeking.

Calicut was the capital city of the realm of the zamorin<sup>13</sup> the most powerful ruler in south-west India. He derived a considerable income from a fertile hinterland, but also from an extensive trade which, though himself a Hindu, he was content to leave in the hands of Muslims. His attitude towards the Portuguese was initially friendly, and this must be reckoned greatly to his credit.

The first contacts of the travellers with Asian peoples were full of surprises. Three days after their first sight of land, they were introduced to two Moors (Muslims) from Tunis, who could speak Castilian (Spanish) and Genoese (Italian). 'They asked what he sought so far from home, and he told them that we came in search of *Christians* and of spices.'<sup>14</sup> There were in India more Europeans, or Levantines, with some knowledge of European languages, than had been expected. These men – slaves, runaways, deserters, pirates, and respectable merchants – meet us at every turn in the records. This unexpected provision of interpreters made it possible for the Portuguese quickly to make contact with Indians of whose languages they did not know a single word, languages which they showed singularly little inclination to learn.<sup>15</sup>

The Portuguese, when they arrived, were wholly ignorant of everything which related to the life of India, except that it was the country from which spices came. This early reference to Christians seems to reflect their obsession with the legend of Prester John, and the hope that it might be possible to join hands, behind the backs of the Muslims, with this great potentate. When at length the emperor of Ethiopia was discovered in the fastnesses of his mountains, this somewhat bedraggled ruler was a sad disappointment to those who had placed such confidence in his majesty and power.

## *Europe and Asia*

Soon after the arrival of the Portuguese occurred an episode so bizarre that, were it not for the naive simplicity with which it is recorded by a generally reliable writer, it might be deemed wholly incredible:

When we arrived they took us to a large church, and this is what we saw:— The body of the church is as large as a monastery, all built of hewn stone and covered with tiles . . . In the centre of the body of the church rose a chapel, all built of hewn stone . . . within this sanctuary stood a small image which they said represented Our Lady . . . We did not go into the chapel, for it is the custom that only certain servants of the church called *quafees* should enter. These *quafees* wore some threads passing over the left shoulder and under the right arm, in the same manner as our deacons wear the stole . . . 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>16</sup>

It is clear that the sailors had made their way into a Hindu temple, where they encountered Brāhman priests, wearing as is their custom the sacred thread of the twice-born. The darkness of the shrine, only dimly illuminated by wisps of cotton placed in oil, and the strong smell of incense may well have suggested to them that they were in a Christian shrine. One reporter adds that the four priests entered the sanctuary, pointed to the image and said *Maria, Maria*, at which the natives prostrated themselves and the sailors also knelt in adoration of the virgin.<sup>17</sup>

Vasco da Gama stayed on and off the coast of India for about three months. During that time he was successful in having an interview with the zamorin and learnt one useful lesson. He had set out from Europe with no idea of the wealth and splendour of even a minor Indian court, in which lavish display was of the order of the day; in consequence the presents he had brought with him were of less opulence than the zamorin might expect to find in the gifts offered by the petty rulers of the locality, or even by the merchants concerned to win or to retain his favour. Da Gama had also learned what products of Europe might be acceptable as articles of commerce with India, and carried home with him specimens of those Indian products which might commend themselves to European tastes.<sup>18</sup>

Da Gama had made the first contacts. Without delay further action was taken. A second and much larger expedition left Lisbon on 9 March 1500 under the command of Pedro Alvares Cabral, and reached Calicut on 13 September of the same year. Three incidents made this expedition memorable.

First, the Portuguese manifested for the first time that savage brutality by which their relations with the Indian peoples were so often to be stained. A number of Portuguese, perhaps thirty or forty,<sup>19</sup> had been killed in a riot, provoked by their own insensitiveness to the feelings of the inhabitants. In retaliation Cabral seized six hundred boatmen who had had nothing to do

### *The Portuguese Settle in India*

with the riot and slaughtered them all. The city of Calicut was subjected to a heavy bombardment which lasted for two days, and brought about considerable loss of life and destruction of parts of the city. No excuse can be offered for such excesses. All that can be said is that the Portuguese carried with them to the East memories of the savagery with which Muslims had carried on the war in the Mediterranean. Not unnaturally campaigns against Muslims in the East took on something of the ruthless character of Mediterranean warfare.<sup>20</sup>

Fortunately this was not the whole story. The Westerners soon learned to distinguish between Hindus and Muslims, and also between the Arabs who for centuries had controlled the sea-routes and other Muslims who had long been settled in India. With the latter amicable relations were occasionally established.<sup>21</sup> And even the Arabs came to acquire considerable respect for the dexterity which the Portuguese mariners showed in manoeuvring their ships, and admiration for the gallantry and courage which they showed in their many battles and defeats.

Secondly, Cabral discovered Cochin, a far better centre for the operations of the Portuguese than Calicut could ever be. Cochin had a harbour adequate to all the needs of the sixteenth century. It had immediate access to the great pepper-growing regions of Kerala. Moreover, the rājā of Cochin lived in a state of smouldering enmity to the zamorin; it was natural for him, on the principle that the enemies of my enemy are my friends, to offer a warm welcome to the Portuguese. It was at Cochin that the Portuguese were able to erect their first fort and to build their first church.

In the third place, the Portuguese made their first contact with real *Christians*. What they discovered was very different from their brilliant expectations of the kingdom of a great Christian monarch. Yet here was an ancient church solidly established, and a considerable body of Christians who might be expected to welcome these powerful co-religionists from the West and to serve as their allies in an alien land.

### 3 THE PORTUGUESE SETTLE IN INDIA

When, in 1509, Affonso de Albuquerque was appointed governor of the Portuguese possessions in the East, he was already fifty-six years of age, and had not had experience of any previous voyage to India. Yet he was the first to think strategically about the situation, and to work out plans which, if adopted in their entirety, would have made the Portuguese position much stronger than it actually was. He saw that their cause could not be maintained by annual visits of the fleet, with a few Portuguese left on the coast to maintain continuity between these visits. There must be a permanent presence of Europe in Asia. Albuquerque did not think in terms

of extensive conquests such as had been effected by Spaniards and Portuguese in the western world. The forces available would never have been sufficient to reduce such powerful kingdoms as were to be encountered on the mainland of India. But Portugal must have a number of strong points entirely under its control, near to ports in which the fleets and their sailors could rest between monsoons, in which the ships could be refitted, and from which they could issue out to control the sea-routes. In these centres there must be a sufficient Portuguese population to man the armed forces, to serve the various needs of the navy, and to maintain and supervise what it was hoped would become a steadily growing trade.

According to this plan, Goa should be the centre of the whole operation, and should look out across the Arabian Sea to Mombasa, the corresponding strong-point on the east coast of Africa. Aden would control the narrow straits at the mouth of the Red Sea, and bottle up the commerce which had been accustomed to use that route. Ormuz would control the entrance to the Persian Gulf, and open up to European merchants the land-routes which were still valuable as alternatives to the long route by sea. Malacca would keep a watch on the straits through which the greater part of the shipping between the Indian world and the Pacific world of China and Japan passed then, as it still passes today. Diu should later be added to guard the access to the Gulf of Cambay and inland India. Cochin would control the trade in pepper and other items of Indian export. Other strong points could be added, if needed.<sup>22</sup>

The whole of Albuquerque's plan was never carried out. Goa was seized in 1510, Malacca in 1511, Ormuz by 1518. But Aden, though several times assaulted, was never captured, and the Red Sea remained in the hands of the enemies of the Christian world. Nevertheless the Portuguese, insignificant on land, were extremely powerful at sea; in twenty years the balance of power in the South Asian waters had been decisively changed.

Albuquerque next turned his attention to the problem of converting fortresses into colonies, and of bringing into existence a large enough Christian population to maintain the imperial structure which he had called into being. He saw clearly that this would be possible only if there were a large class of Christians who regarded India as their home and would never return to Portugal. It was with this in mind that he advised his men to marry the 'white and beautiful widows and daughters' of the Muslims who had been killed in the various battles about Goa.<sup>23</sup> He intended this to be limited to women of fair colour, presumably of Arab origin, who were prepared to become Christians. He did not desire marriage between Europeans and women of dark colour, that is to say of Dravidian origin. Things did not work out quite as he had intended. There was little prejudice among the Portuguese against miscegenation, but Indians of good family did not particularly wish their daughters to marry foreigners. The disproportion in

the numbers of the sexes inevitably carried the day, and miscegenation beyond the limits of what Albuquerque had desired became not so much the exception as the rule. In 1524 an observer remarked that of the white men in Goa 'all or the great majority are married to Negresses, whom they take to Church on horseback'.<sup>24</sup>

Like their successors the British, the Dutch, the Danes and the French, the Portuguese had come to trade, and trade they would. But there was a difference in method. The other European nations worked through trading companies; Portuguese trade was from the start a royal enterprise and to a large extent a royal monopoly. The Indian Ordinances of 1520 listed as items controlled by the royal monopoly pepper, ginger, cinnamon, nutmeg, mace, lac, silk and crude borax.<sup>25</sup> Among all these pepper is king. What the merchant desires above all else is merchandise which is compact, light, durable and costly; pepper is almost ideally suited for profitable trade.<sup>26</sup> The amount brought in to Europe varied considerably from year to year; it was reckoned that 30,000 quintals, that is about 700 tons, from all sources would be a satisfactory gathering for any one year; when all the expenses of the voyage had been defrayed, considerable profits could be expected.

The primary interest of the king was in the trade between India and the metropolis; this is the subject on which we have the most extensive evidence in our sources. But, if the enterprise in Asia was to be viable at all, it was essential to find local sources of income, and that meant the establishment of commerce within the eastern world itself. Goa was primarily a capital, the centre of administration, and a military and naval arsenal; but before long it had established itself also as the centre of a flourishing trade, the import of horses into India from Persia and Arabia, and this also was declared to be a royal monopoly.

To the Indian prince the horse was a necessity. The cavalry were the heart and pride of every Indian army. Travellers from the west give fantastic figures for the Indian armies of their day. But, if a minor ruler in South India required 2,000 replacements in a year, the demands made by powerful rulers such as the kings of Bījāpur and Vijayanagar can be estimated with a good deal of probability.<sup>27</sup> If it is true, as stated by some authorities, that an Arab charger cost as much in India as a good cavalry horse in Europe, fairly accurate calculations can be made of the profits that flowed through Goa in a year, not all of them into the coffers of the king.

When Albuquerque died, he left Goa provided with many armourers and officers employed in the setting of jewels and precious stones, saddle-makers, buckler-makers, blacksmiths, stonemasons, gunfounders, master-workmen skilled in the manufacture of matchlocks, ships' carpenters, caulkers; the greater part of whom were Portuguese, the rest being native Christians, as true vassals and subjects of the king of Portugal as though they were natives of Portugal.<sup>28</sup>

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With the help of these and other craftsmen, a stately city soon arose to reflect the strength and glory of Portugal in the East.

Secular priests came to India with most of the annual fleets from Lisbon. In addition, within thirty years of the capture of the island, several of the great religious orders of the western church had set up their convents and churches in what was now Portuguese India. The eye of the traveller approaching Goa from the sea was caught first by the noble edifices erected by the Fathers and Brothers for residence and worship. Highest of all were the towers of the church of St Catherine, later the cathedral, built so lofty that they overlooked a corner of the garden of the Franciscan convent, and caused the friars to complain bitterly of intrusion on the privacy of their meditations. These buildings earned for Goa the title *Nova Roma*. Even when trade and administration had moved away from the old city to a less unhealthy site eight miles away, the ancient buildings could call out almost exaggerated enthusiasm from a western traveller. That doughty Protestant Claudius Buchanan, arriving at Goa on 23 January 1808, wrote:

The magnificence of the Churches of Goa far exceeded any idea I had formed from the previous description . . . The ancient specimens of architecture in this place far excel anything that has been attempted in modern times in any other part of the east both in grandeur and taste . . . The Cathedral of Goa is worthy of one of the principal cities of Europe; and the Church and Convent of the Augustinians (in which I now reside) is a noble pile of buildings situated on an eminence, and has a magnificent appearance from afar.<sup>29</sup>

The number of pure Portuguese resident in the *Estado da India* must not be exaggerated. A good authority suggests that at no time in the sixteenth century were there in Asia more than six or seven thousand Portuguese males of military age and capable of bearing arms. This implies a total population of about four times that number, but these were scattered in all the Portuguese settlements from Moçambique to Macao. This was the core of the Christian population of the area. But ere long the Portuguese found themselves saddled with a mixed multitude, made up of the most diverse elements, extraordinarily difficult to control and to a considerable extent calling itself Christian.

At the top of the social scale was the governor or viceroy sent from Portugal, who came accompanied by a large retinue of followers and lived in regal state, as became his position.<sup>30</sup> The wise proposal of Albuquerque that royal officials should be appointed for eight years was unfortunately not accepted. The principal officials were appointed only for a three-year term; it was difficult for them to resist the temptation to enrich themselves while they could. Complaints of corruption are ceaseless, and apparently well-founded.

## *The Portuguese Settle in India*

Some Portuguese, however, decided to make India their home, settled down on a basis of permanence, and like Cosme Anes to whom frequent reference will be made in these pages, became pillars of the establishment both in church and state. Such men lived lives of uprightness and integrity; and, if they had made such local marriages as Albuquerque recommended, lived in fidelity to the partners they had chosen.

The majority of the resident Portuguese took the easier way of irregular liaisons; the ease with which slave-girls of Arab, African or Indian origin could be obtained led many of them frankly to establish harems. The good Fr Lancilotto SJ, always inclined to take a dark view of every situation, complains at a rather later period of the laxity of conduct of these Portuguese:

There are innumerable Portuguese who buy droves of girls and sleep with all of them and this is known publicly. This is carried to such excess that there was one man in Malacca who had twenty-four women of various races, all his slaves and all of whom he enjoyed . . . But other men, as soon as they can afford to buy a female slave, almost always use her as a girl friend (*amiga*), beside many other dishonourable proceedings in my poor understanding.<sup>31</sup>

If children were born in these irregular households, they suffered from an almost total lack of discipline or education.

There was always a lack of manpower in Portuguese India. In consequence every conceivable method had to be used to persuade men to emigrate to India, and to maintain the strength of the army of the *Estado*. Even the most hardened criminals could be promised pardon and release, if they would agree to leave their country for their country's good. Hence the anguished cry of a writer of a rather later date: 'To give a true account of the people who come here from Portugal, they are the scum of that kingdom, and the most unruly in it, and who cannot stay there. If some of these are *fidalgos*, they are mostly illegitimate.'<sup>32</sup> An attempt to enable such characters to settle down was made by encouraging them to marry Indian women and by giving special privileges to those who did so. Soldiers who married were allowed to retire from the army. Those who accepted this status were known as *cansados*. The idea was that these men should occupy themselves on the lands granted to them as farmers, or as craftsmen and artisans. But all too often they were led astray, like their betters, by the ease with which slaves could be acquired; these were set to work for them, while their masters enjoyed the leisured life of the *fidalgo* to which they could never have aspired in their native land. No Indian women of the better class could be found to accept as husbands men on this level, and marriages tended to be made with women of the lower castes. The offspring of such marriages learned little of western ways, and less of Christianity, in their homes. The *mestiço* prided himself on what he had of European blood, but

in many cases failed to win the respect either of the free-born Portuguese or of the Indians.

A further problem was presented by the sailors who arrived in considerable numbers every year with the fleets, and had to spend four or five months in India with very little to employ them. It was unlikely that they would live lives of perfect chastity. From the start prostitution flourished with all its attendant evils. If children were born of these promiscuous unions, they suffered from almost total neglect, from the lack of any regular home life, of education and discipline, and grew up wild and disorderly and disposed to a life of crime.

All these classes existed in all the Portuguese settlements. And beyond those who could claim some Portuguese blood and in most cases called themselves by Portuguese names, there were the Indians of full blood, now subjects of the Portuguese but unallied to them by any ties of kinship, natural loyalty or similarity of culture, whom the Portuguese oddly named *Canarim*.<sup>33</sup>

#### 4 THE PORTUGUESE AND THE INDIAN PEOPLES

At the conquest of Goa the Portuguese had expelled the Moors, or Arabs, from the islands. But there was still a large Hindu population, and in Cochin and the other smaller settlements the western immigrants found themselves little more than a drop in an ocean of Hinduism. All higher posts in government and administration were kept in the hands of the Portuguese; but naturally on the lower levels the newcomers maintained the organisation of the population much as it had been before their coming, making use of those who had been trained in the native ways both of administration and commerce. And the Brāhmins, by their intelligence and skill as clerks and accountants, made themselves indispensable to the Portuguese, as they later became to the British.<sup>34</sup>

Moreover, the Muslims could neither be exterminated nor excluded from all contact with the Europeans. In the Mediterranean the rule 'no trading with the enemy' could be established and to some extent enforced. It was quite otherwise in India. As Albuquerque with his rough commonsense wrote to the king: 'Neither Hindus nor native Christians are capitalists; the Muhammedans alone are in a big way of business. All religions and races work together so much in India that you cannot separate them. Guzerat *bantias* (Hindus) employ Muhammedan sailors.'<sup>35</sup>

By 1530 Goa was a flourishing city, and Portugal had established itself firmly as the dominant naval power in the Indian Ocean and beyond. Trade with Europe and Arabia by no means exhausted the energies of the *Estado da India*. For a large part of its prosperity it depended on local enterprise and the development of intensive trading in India and in the surrounding



## *The Coming of the Mughuls*

countries. All this was carried on not in the ships, always exiguous in number, that came from Portugal year by year, but in ships built in India – carracks and galleons for the long voyages as far as Japan, galleys for coastal defence, caravels, galliots and foists<sup>36</sup> for the coastal trade. For these purposes the splendid teak of the forests of Canara was available, and everything else needed for the preparation and outfitting of ships could be found in the area without dependence on European resources. The Arabs had preceded the Portuguese by centuries as mariners in these waters, and were past masters in the art of exploiting what lay to hand; commonsense dictated that the Portuguese should learn from them.

R.S. Whiteway held the view that by 1550 the epoch of Portugal's greatness in India was at an end. It may be that some symptoms of decay could at that date already be discerned. But, when necessary, the *Estado* could put forth a considerable military effort. In 1570 three of the leading princes in India – the sultan of Bijāpur, the king of Golconda and the zamorin of Calicut – determined to put an end once and for all to that Portuguese power by which they felt themselves increasingly threatened. Goa was invested, and the siege was pressed with great vigour. Portuguese losses were heavy; but the defence was maintained over more than ten months with the unflinching courage which the Portuguese were able so often to display. Then the league which had been formed with such high hopes of success was disbanded, and Western control of the seas, though weakened, was maintained intact.

It might be thought that the Portuguese power was gravely threatened by the rise of the great new Muslim dominion, to which our attention must next be turned. But this was not in fact the case during the sixteenth century. The great Akbar was, of course aware of the presence of foreigners on the coast of India; but, being himself a landsman, and seeing no sign of any attempt on the part of the Portuguese to penetrate far inland, he seems to have been content to leave them for the most part undisturbed. With the conquest of Gujarāt by the Mughul in 1572 the Asian and European forces became neighbours. But, in so far as any relationships existed between the two powers, they were on the whole friendly rather than otherwise. When the Portuguese power began to be seriously threatened, it was not by enemies from the landward side, but by far more serious incursions from the sea. It was by Europeans and not by Indians that the power of Portugal in the East was first undermined and finally destroyed.

### 5 THE COMING OF THE MUGHULS

When, in 1526, an army of Turki soldiers from Central Asia, having first made themselves masters of Afghanistan, descended into the plains of India, there was no particular reason for thinking that they would stay and

establish a permanent dominion. Many of the invaders of India, Muslims among them, had been simply raiders like Mahmūd of Ghaznī, who had come, robbed, despoiled, and then retreated to their distant fastnesses. Some stayed longer; but the majority of them did no more than establish more or less ephemeral kingdoms, with constantly shifting boundaries, and left little permanent mark on the countries which they had conquered. So, when Bābur made it plain that he intended to stay, there was still no reason to think that a climacteric in the history of India had arrived, and that the Mughul dynasty would come nearer than any other ruler since Aśoka eighteen hundred years before to unifying the whole of the Indian sub-continent in allegiance to a single sovereign. That the Mughul rulers were able to achieve this, to establish a dynasty which was to continue in prosperity for two centuries and to cover India with monuments of imperishable beauty, they owed to the chance that they were able to produce a series of rulers of exceptional gifts and abilities – one general of far more than ordinary talents, and three outstanding statesmen and administrators, in one of whom the art of ruling rose to the height of genius.

Zahr-ud-Dīn Muhammad Bābur, the first of the Mughul line to establish dominion in India, was born on 14 February 1483, in the same year as, on the other side of the world, Martin Luther. On his father's side he was descended in the direct line from Tamerlane, on his mother's side from Chingiz Khān, thus uniting two of the most famous families in the history of his people. We know Bābur better than we can know almost any other of the great rulers of the past, since throughout his adult life he wrote down almost every day his commentaries, in which he depicts with the utmost candour, indeed almost with naïveté, success and frustration, aims and interests, and almost every passing impulse and emotion. He reveals himself throughout as soldier and conqueror, but at the same time as endowed with an inexhaustible curiosity about all that passes before his eyes, and with a sense of natural beauty which is rare in the men of his day and brings him near to readers of a later age.<sup>37</sup> His careful descriptions of animals and plants of India reveal great powers of observation. 'These portions of his memoirs read like the notes of a peace-loving naturalist rather than those of a restless warrior.'<sup>38</sup>

Bābur succeeded, on the death of his father in 1494, to the throne of a small kingdom on the far side of the Hindū Kush mountains. The next twenty years were spent in a series of complicated and tedious wars, at the end of which Bābur had emerged as conqueror of the Afghans, ruling from his capital of Kābul. From an early age he had formed the resolve to conquer India, and to re-establish the empire which his ancestor Tamerlane had briefly held and as quickly relinquished.

The moment for doing so had now fully come. The empire of Delhi had

### *The Coming of the Mughuls*

almost ceased to exist, and the dynasty of Lodī was trembling to its final fall. As Bābur himself wrote, power in India at that time was divided up between seven rulers, five Muslim and two Hindu.<sup>39</sup> The invader had at his disposal an army which, though not large in numbers by Indian standards, was seasoned in many campaigns and devoted to his cause. Perhaps first among the invaders of India Bābur understood the value of artillery and the use which can be made of it in battle. This arm which had changed the face of warfare in Europe was now to do the same in India, with the balance tilted for two centuries heavily in favour of the Western powers.<sup>40</sup>

On 20 April 1526 the rival forces were in line against one another, Bābur having a force of perhaps 25,000 men. On the following day battle was engaged all along the line. Fighting was fierce, but after midday superior tactics and the mobility of Bābur's troops prevailed, and the rout was complete. It was reckoned that fifteen to sixteen thousand of the defenders lay dead upon the field. As Bābur himself wrote: 'When the incitement to battle had come, the sun was spear-high; till midday fighting had been in full force; noon passed, the foe was crushed in defeat, our friends rejoicing and gay. By God's mercy and kindness this difficult affair was made easy for us.'<sup>41</sup>

On 7 April 1527 a second great battle was fought, at Khārua; the rānā of Chitor, the greatest of Hindu chieftains, was laid low, and thus the work of conquest was completed. Bābur was now lord of an extensive domain, covering the greater part of north India, and stretching into the fastnesses of Afghanistan.

In the most famous passage of his *Memoirs* Bābur has set down his general impressions of Hindūstān:

Hindūstān is a country of few charms. Its people have no good looks; of social intercourse, paying and receiving visits there is none; of genius and capacity none; of manners none; in handicraft and work there is no form or symmetry, method or quality; there are no good horses, no good dogs, no grapes, musk-melons or first-rate fruits, no ice or cold water, no good bread or cooked food in the *bāzārs*, no Hot-baths, no Colleges, no candles, torches or candlesticks . . . There are no running-waters in their gardens or residences. Their residences have no charm, air, regularity or symmetry.<sup>42</sup>

It may be asked, if Bābur disliked Hindūstān so much, why did he set out to conquer it? Would he not have done far better to stay at home? He did, however, find some redeeming features in the country:

Pleasant things of Hindūstān are that it is a large country and has masses of gold and silver . . . Another good thing in Hindūstān is that it has unnumbered and endless workmen of every kind. There is a fixed caste for every sort of work and for every thing, which has done that work or that thing from father to son till now.<sup>43</sup>

## *Europe and Asia*

Only six years elapsed between Bābur's first occupation of Lahore in 1524 and his death in 1530. Most of these years were spent in warring and in self-defence. It was given him to win an empire but not to organise it; that was a task left to his grandson Akbar. Yet what Bābur achieved was memorable; with him Islam became a major factor in the life of India in every part; the remote consequences of his actions were to be felt more than four centuries after his death.

It is pleasant to quote the judgement on one great ruler of India recorded by one who in his day had also been a notable ruler of men:

The great charm of the work is in the character of the author, whom we find, after all the trials of a long life, retaining the same kind and affectionate heart, the same easy and sociable temper, with which he set out upon his career; and in whom the possession of power and grandeur had neither blunted the delicacy of his taste nor diminished the sensibility to the enjoyment of nature and imagination.<sup>44</sup>

Some of the peoples of Central Asia had become Christians. When John of Monte Corvino reached Peking, he found already established there Christians of the Nestorian persuasion. At one time the pope entertained fair hopes of the conversion to Christianity of the Mughul peoples. These hopes were all to be frustrated. Islam entered into the vacuum left by the decay of ancestral beliefs, and Christian churches were found only as fragments in the midst of an encompassing sea of Islam. Of all this Bābur shows no awareness, and Christians are rarely, if ever, mentioned in his *Memoirs*. He is a Sunnī Muslim. To him Sh'ahs are heretics on whom the wrath of God rests. Hindus are idolaters, whose faith is to be destroyed as opportunity offers. Bābur was not a persecutor or destroyer on any major scale – his genial temper would not have permitted this. But his spirit is that of the *jihād*, the holy war against the unbelievers; those who do not conform cannot expect more than rather grudging tolerance. Bābur would never have been able to rise to the level of the broad and generous toleration of all religious faiths professed and practised by the great Akbar.

Of the reign of Humāyūn (1530–56) little need be said. Bābur had taken the trouble to bring his eldest son forward and to give him opportunity to train himself both in military and in civil matters. But the young man failed to rise to the expectations of his father. Like all of his race, he was brave, and on occasion could show both courage and resolution. But all too often his temper was sluggish, and his kindness of disposition such as to make him unduly complaisant, when resolute and decisive action was called for. His natural gifts may have been impaired by the use of opium to which he was addicted. He had been expelled from his kingdom by Afghan enemies, and by them kept out of it for many years. In 1555 he managed to return, but this was too late for him to set about the task which ought to have been entered

## *The Great Akbar*

into many years before. On 24 January 1556 he stumbled and fell on the steep staircase leading to the roof of his library. He was picked up fatally injured, and died two days later, leaving to his son Akbar an empire stripped of many of its natural resources, threatened by enemies on every side, and in a state of economic collapse.

### 6 THE GREAT AKBAR

Akbar at the time of his accession was in his fourteenth year, and was therefore for a time under the direction of guardians and preceptors. But not many years were to pass before he began to display the same qualities which had made his grandfather great, and to develop other gifts which had rarely been seen in members of the *Timūrid* family.

Akbar has been so constantly presented in the panegyrics written by contemporaries and by later historians as the perfection of all that a ruler ought to be, and lauded to the skies as administrator and father of his people, that it is not easy always to remember that there was also in his soul much of the spirit of the soldier and the conqueror. His maxim at all times was that 'a monarch should ever be intent on conquest; otherwise his neighbours will rise against him'. In accordance with this maxim the empire had throughout his reign a military element as the basis of its organisation.

But in his early years conquest had to be preceded by defence. Shortly after his accession the capture of Delhi and Lahore by the Afghans reduced his actual possessions to the domain which remained to him in the Punjab. As late as 1581 extensive rebellions in Bihar and elsewhere threatened the stability of the whole fabric. But gradually a resolute will, skill in the choice of commanders, willingness to pursue limited objectives with a view to the whole, gave success to the arms of Akbar, and at his death he was able to leave to his successor a coherent territory which included the whole of the Gangetic plain as far as Bengal, the Punjab, Afghanistan, and extensive regions of central Asia.

The limits of Mughul power must, however, be recognised. Akbar's attempts to penetrate the Deccan, with the exception of the reduction of Ahmednagar in 1599, were unsuccessful. Almost the whole of peninsular or Dravidian India retained its independence. And this independence was almost exclusively Hindu and not Muslim.

During the reign of Akbar, one great change came about in the area which he did not control – the collapse of the kingdom of Vijayanagar, the last great Hindu kingdom in the south. This kingdom had begun to expand in the fourteenth century, and at the height of its power controlled the greater part of South India.<sup>45</sup> Records left by Europeans who had visited the city, or actually lived there, speak in terms of unbounded admiration of the extent of

the city and of the wealth that had accumulated there.<sup>46</sup> Yet when the city was destroyed after the great battle which took place on 23 January 1565, the destruction was so complete that recovery proved impossible, and, though Vijayanagar continued to exist, it never attained to anything like its earlier power and influence. There was justification for the title of the work by Robert Sewell: *A Forgotten Empire*.<sup>47</sup> It was the absence of any great Indian power in the south that made possible the aggressions and successes of the European powers; if the destruction of Vijayanagar had been less complete, there might never have been a Dupleix and there might never have been a Clive. In that case, the whole history of India would have been different; and the history of the Christian mission in India, intricately though usually indirectly linked as this has been to the European element in Indian history, might well have taken an entirely different course.

The rule of the Mughuls in India was foreign rule, and continued to be so until the day of its final collapse. Akbar was less of a foreigner than his predecessors, inasmuch as unlike them he had been born in India, and showed none of those sentimental yearnings for the wide spaces of Central Asia and the high valley of Afghanistan of which we become aware in the writings of Bābur. But at home he spoke a language which was not Indian, and in his earlier years at least he practised a religion which was alien to the vast majority of his subjects. The foreignness of Mughul rule was emphasised by the imposition of Persian as the language of the court and of the law courts. Persian is an elegant idiom, and philologically related to the Indo-European languages spoken in northern India. But hardly anyone in India spoke Persian as his native tongue; generations later the attention of British administrators was distracted, by the necessity of learning Persian, from the much more important task of learning well an Indian language, a task which was left almost exclusively to the missionaries.

Mughul rule was centralised and autocratic. The emperor held in his own hand all the strings of the elaborate and generally efficient system of administration which he had devised. He made the appointments, and the progress or fall of each officer depended entirely on the will and judgement of the emperor.<sup>48</sup> In this administrative system, natives of India played only a minor part. The careful analysis by H. Blochmann of the tables given in the second part of the *Ā'im-i-Akbar*<sup>49</sup> shows that, of those appointed to high office up to 1595, just over two-thirds belonged to families which had come to India with Bābur, or had entered from Central Asia during the reign of Akbar. Of the remaining third, rather more than half the appointments were held by Muslims, and rather less than half by Hindus; but of these Hindus the great majority were Rajputs; 'that is to say, the great majority of the appointments were made to consolidate his hold on the chiefs who submitted to his rule'.<sup>50</sup>

The method of appointment and remuneration of these great officers may in part account for the disparity between wealth and poverty in the Mughul realms which was noted by all Western travellers in India in those days. The high official was in receipt of a salary which by any standards was enormous. But his heir was the emperor,<sup>51</sup> and any wealth found in possession of the official at the time of his death passed immediately to the ruler; the sons of an official had no claim either to the estates or to the appointment of their father. No doubt some officials tried to lay by a sufficient competence for their natural heirs; it was said that such officials particularly welcomed gifts in gold, since these were easily concealed and could not readily be identified. But for the most part the rich man was inclined to spend what he had whilst he had it, to enjoy the pleasures of life and to dazzle the eyes of all beholders with the splendour of his accoutrements, his jewels and his palace.

Europe thought of India in terms of 'the gorgeous East'. To those on the spot the contrast between the wealth of some and the poverty of many was painful. Then, as now, the main source of revenue was the land. The cultivator, the real source of all wealth, even when delivered by a strong government from perils by robbers and perils by raiders, was ground down by a number of exactors with little hope of redress for injustice. Linschoten the Dutchman, an accurate observer, says picturesquely of the inhabitants of the west coast in the last quarter of the sixteenth century, that 'they live very poorly, go naked, . . . and eat so little that it seemeth they live by the air; they are likewise most of them small and weak of limbs'.<sup>52</sup> The recurrent famines by which one area after another was rendered desolate revealed that the ordinary people had few reserves of food to see them through the difficult times, and few resources of physical strength to help them ward off the danger of death by slow starvation.

One of the most attractive characteristics of the Mughul rulers was diligence. Each day much time was spent in Durbar, and it was a tradition that the poorest of the emperor's subjects, if he felt himself ill-treated or oppressed, might make his appeal direct to the sovereign authority in the hope of a hearing and of redress. The English traveller Ralph Fitch (1610) reports that 'on the further side of this court of presence are hanged golden bells, that if any be oppressed and can get no justice of the king's officers, by ringing these bells when the king sits, he is called, and the matter discussed before the king'. Fitch adds the suitably cautionary remark: 'but let them be sure that their cause be good, lest he be punished for presumption to trouble the king'.<sup>53</sup>

Nothing has won for Akbar so full and unconditional approval from later ages as his policy of *sulh-i-kull* or universal toleration. This Akbar did not learn from the traditions of his ancestors nor from the precepts of Islam. More importance has been attributed by scholars to the teachings of his tutor Mīr 'Ābdul-Latīf, a Sayyid of Qhasvīn, so broad and tolerant in his

ideas as to incur the suspicion on the part of orthodox Muslims that he was at heart a Shī'ah. This admirable man failed to persuade his pupil to learn to read, but may have been more successful in other directions – 'he was not to be the head of a community but all people. No Muslim ruler before, not even Sher Shāh, with all his benevolence, held this exalted conception of State and kingship so definitely and vividly.'<sup>54</sup> The story of the later developments in Akbar's religious policy will be held over till a later section. Here it may be noted that the precepts of the teacher, excellent as they doubtless were, might well have fallen on barren ground, had not the young pupil had within him the elements of greatness in a restless and inquiring mind, and in a willingness to learn from many men and to entertain many points of view.

## 7 AKBAR AND FOREIGN VISITORS

The year 1572 was of central importance in the development of this aspect of the character of the emperor. In that year he saw the sea for the first time in his life, and in that year he encountered the Portuguese. Though neither of the parties knew it, a struggle between two continents and two religions which was to last for three centuries had been launched. Like his forebears Akbar was a landsman and had never seen the ocean. With the conquest of Gujarāt and the occupation of Surat, he found himself standing for the first time on the ocean shore. To have lived from birth a thousand miles from the ocean in every direction results in a certain narrowness, an unawareness of that which lies beyond the horizon, and a concentration on that which is local and near at hand. When confronted by the endless sea, the mind of man is lifted up to far horizons and to that which is beyond his immediate reach. This was the way to Mecca,<sup>55</sup> to the fountainhead of Islamic belief. Here were merchants of many lands – China and Rūm and distant places of the west.

The merchants of Surat, threatened by the Mughul advance, had written to the Portuguese in Goa asking for their help. The prudent Portuguese, seeing which way the wind was blowing and not minded to involve themselves in local conflicts, instead sent an embassy to Akbar, desiring friendly relations with him. The emperor received the envoys kindly, and put to them many questions about Portugal and the affairs of Europe. The account of the interview given by Abu'l-Fazl is delightful: 'Although it is well known that the holy heart of the Lord of the World is the repository of all knowledge, both spiritual and wordly, his exemplary mind deigned to make these inquiries a means of showing kindness to that crew of savages.'<sup>56</sup>

Akbar certainly found much to entertain him in the tales told by these wanderers from afar. He made the same mistake as all other Indian rulers of



that time in underestimating the power of the West, and the spirit of ruthless persistence which would lead the English and the Dutch to the creation of their great empires in the East. He was shrewd enough to see that the Portuguese had no thought of greatly expanding the coastal bridgeheads which they held. Nor did he regard their religion as a rival to his own. He therefore saw no strong arguments against allowing them to continue as they were, provided that they did not interfere in his concerns, and some advantages in having such active traders, especially in horses, at his gates. He had no desire to rival them at sea; the ships which he chartered were content, like others, to provide themselves with the *cartaz*, the Portuguese licence to trade in Indian waters.<sup>57</sup>

Akbar, with his inquiring mind, was by no means averse to entertaining at his court foreigners from whom he hoped to learn about other countries and other forms of faith. In 1584 three Englishmen made their way to India and to the court of the 'Great Mogor', and were ready to make their approach to Akbar.

The voyage of these three adventurous travellers is to be seen in the context of the English endeavour to break out of the European imprisonment, and to find a way into the rich trading areas of India and the East. Attempts to discover the north-west passage had ended in failure. No better success attended the voyages of explorers round the icy coasts of Siberia. It seemed worthwhile to ascertain whether it was possible, in the face of Turkish and Portuguese opposition, to reopen the land-route by way of Persia and the Persian Gulf. We are fortunate in having the narrative of Ralph Fitch, one of the travellers who left England in 1583 and after many hardships returned safely to England in 1591, having in these eight years seen much of the Eastern world.

The party of four consisted of John Newbery and Ralph Fitch merchants,<sup>58</sup> William Leedes a jeweller, and James Story a painter. Leaving England in 1583 on the good ship *Tyger*,<sup>59</sup> the travellers reached Ormuz without great difficulty, but then their troubles began; shortly after their arrival they were put in prison and had part of their goods taken from them; 'and from hence the eleventh of October he [the captain] shipped us and sent us to Goa unto the Viceroy, which at that time was Don Francisco de Mascarenhas' (p. 12). Arrived in Goa the Englishmen were again imprisoned; but by the help of the English Jesuit Thomas Stephens, the first Englishman to live in India, and of the resident Dutchman Jan Huyghen van Linschoten,<sup>60</sup> they were able to find sureties and to regain their liberty. Later, travelling by way of Bijāpur and Golconda, they reached Agra, and finding that Akbar was at his new capital Fathpur Sikri, followed him there.

Fitch's report of what they found is disappointingly thin. He tells us that the king has there '1,000 elephants, 1,000 horses, 1,400 tame deere, 800

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concubines, such store of ounces [hunting leopards], tigers, buffles, cocks and hawkes, that it is very strange to see' (p. 17). But as to social and religious conditions he is silent. It is clear that the visitors were received by Akbar, since he took Leedes into his service. At this point Leedes and Newbery fade from history. Fitch, after travels through eastern India, Burma and as far as the Shan States, made his way back to England. Here he seems to have persuaded the authorities that the land-route to India was no longer viable, and that the route round the Cape of Good Hope, for all its perils, was to be preferred.<sup>61</sup>

### 8 RIVALS TO THE PORTUGUESE

It is unlikely that either Akbar or the Portuguese had grasped the full significance of the events that they were observing; but in point of fact one of the great revolutions of history was taking place before their eyes. Supremacy at sea had already passed out of the hands of the great Italian trading cities, Venice, Genoa and the rest, to the Atlantic nations Spain and Portugal. They in their turn were to be replaced by the northern nations, first by England and Holland, a little later by Denmark and Germany, with France somewhat uneasily poised between the Mediterranean and the Atlantic worlds. The happenings of the sixteenth century had added a religious dimension to the natural antipathies of race, policies and commerce; the northerners were Protestants; the Latins were Roman Catholics of the traditions of the counter-reformation. We have noted how the Portuguese carried into Indian waters the resentments against the Muslims bred in the warfare of the Mediterranean. Similarly, the European nations carried with them tragic memories of religious strife in the West; to the Dutch it seemed natural to retaliate on the Portuguese in India the outrages perpetrated by Roman Catholics on Netherlanders in the low countries.

The first need of the English and the Dutch was for information. And here their need was met by the work of that remarkable Dutchman Jan Huyghen van Linschoten, to whom reference has already been made. As a very young man Linschoten had spent five years in Spain. Then, with a view to improving his fortunes and to seeing more of the world, he accompanied his brother on a voyage to Goa. Having obtained the favour of the archbishop, he was able to live in Goa from 1583 to 1589, and returned to Europe primed with exactly the kind of information that was needed. The first part of his great work, known as the *Itinerary . . . to Portuguese India* was printed in Holland in 1596, translated into English and German in 1599, into Latin twice, also in 1599, and into French in 1610. In this work he gives a comprehensive picture of that world which the Portuguese had made their

## *Rivals to the Portuguese*

own. 'One fact he stresses over and over again which must have stimulated the spirit of adventure of his countrymen – and no doubt that was his intention – namely that the Portuguese system was vulnerable in the extreme, undermined by abuses and corruption, while Portuguese methods of navigation in particular were far inferior to those of Dutch seaman.'<sup>62</sup>

Of even greater significance was another part of the work of Linschoten, the *Navigation of the Portuguese* (1596), a practical seaman's manual of the routes to the east as far as the coasts of China. In particular Linschoten stresses the wealth and productiveness of the great island of Java, 'to which place a man might very well traffic without any impeachment';<sup>63</sup> 'for the Portugals come not thither, because great numbers of Javes come themselves into Malacca to sell their wares'.<sup>64</sup>

The hint was all that was necessary. In 1595 Cornelis de Houtman made the first Dutch voyage to the East. Avoiding the Portuguese settlements, he made straight for Java, where he found the inhabitants friendly and willing to trade. His successful return in 1597 encouraged others to follow where he led the way. Year after year great fleets left Holland, usually sailing far to the south of the established route and making directly for what later came to be called Indonesia. These were strictly commercial voyages, carried out by trading companies which had no thought of attacking the Portuguese and preferred to keep out of their way. But, when local rivalries in Holland were at last overcome and the Dutch United East India Company was formed (20 March 1602), the States-general, by including in its charter the right to make war, to enter into treaties, to occupy territories and to build fortresses, transformed what had started as a peaceful trading enterprise into a great instrument of war and conquest.

The English were a little ahead of the Dutch in their beginnings, but failed to make immediate use of their new opportunities.

The first voyage was led by a distinguished seaman, James Lancaster, who set sail from Plymouth on 10 April 1591. He was successful in penetrating as far as the island of Penang and in entering into friendly relations with the inhabitants. The brief narrative written by Lieutenant Edward Barker shows that even on this first voyage intentions were not wholly peaceable; any 'Portugall ship' encountered was to be regarded as a potential prize. The sailors suffered terribly from scurvy. But when at last Lancaster reached England safely, 'having spent in this voyage three yeares, six weekes and two dayes', he had, like Houtman, demonstrated the possibility of both reaching the East and trading in it.<sup>65</sup>

The second voyage, also to be carried out by James (now Sir James) Lancaster with four full ships, was delayed till 13 February 1601. In the meantime the activities of the Merchant Adventurers had been blessed with royal recognition. These activities, unlike those of the Portuguese, were not

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to be directed and controlled by the sovereign. Though recognised and chartered, they would be dependent on the initiative and goodwill of the merchants, who would work primarily for their own advantage, though not without a view to the glory of their queen and the reputation of their country. So 'the merchants of London, in the year of our Lord 1600, joyned together and made a stocke of seventie-two thousand pounds to bee employed in ships and merchandizes, for the discovery of a trade in the East Indies to bring into this realm spices and other commodities'.<sup>66</sup> The queen knew well what was in the wind, and was pleased to grant a charter to 'the Governor and Company of Merchants of London Trading unto the East Indies'.<sup>67</sup>

The charter was signed on 31 December 1600. Just as three centuries later January 1901 marked the final ending of the great Victorian age, the transition from the sixteenth to the seventeenth century marked the passing away of one era and the beginning of another. It was now certain that the sun of Portugal would sink ever lower down the sky, whereas the new bright stars of England and the Netherlands would rise steadily towards the zenith, until their two great maritime empires would control everything between Aden and the farthest shores of the Moluccas. But there was a difference. When the Portuguese set out for Asia, the aim of their search was commerce and Christians; the Dutch and the English sought only commerce. Christian belief and Christian worship were to be sedulously maintained, and by degrees the missionary factor would enter in. But for the time being commerce was king.

## 6 · Beginnings of Mission

### I THE PORTUGUESE 'PADROADO'

In the beginning was the *padroado*; out of the *padroado* grew many things that followed after. It lasted for five hundred years. The kings of Spain and Portugal wanted papal approval for their enterprises and aggressions; the pope was glad to hand over the labours of conquest and evangelisation to secular rulers who had access to resources far greater than he could himself supply. So from the start it was an arrangement of convenience and advantage to both sides.

The story seems to begin with the circular letter of Pope Martin V dated 4 April 1418, which calls upon all the faithful to bend their energies to the extermination of the unbelievers and their errors.<sup>1</sup> In 1442 the king of Portugal transferred to Prince Henry the Navigator, as grand master of the Order of Christ (founded 1319), all the conquests and discoveries which had been made or which were to be made in Africa and the East. Pope Eugenius IV, in the bull *Etsi suscepti* of 9 January 1443, solemnly confirmed this transfer of power. It is to be noted that in this document we meet for the first time the expression *ius patronatus*, the right of patronage of the king of Portugal.

On 18 June 1452, in the bulls *Dum diversus* and *Divino amore*, Pope Nicolas V committed to the king of Portugal and his successors full authority to invade, conquer, subdue and subject all the kingdoms and territories of the unbelievers, and to reduce these peoples to perpetual subjection, as a sign of the triumph of the catholic faith over its enemies through the might of the king of Portugal. On 8 January, the same pope had confirmed the spiritual authority of the Order of Christ over all countries from Cape Bojador to the Indies, 'which are said to reverence the name of Christ'.<sup>2</sup>

Further definition of the rights and duties adhering to the crown of Portugal was provided in the most important document of this series, the bull of Nicolas V *Romanus Pontifex* of 8 January 1455.<sup>3</sup> In this the king and his successors are authorised to found, in all the provinces conquered or yet

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to be conquered, churches, monasteries and other places of pious usage, and to convey thither ecclesiastical persons whether religious or secular, or members of the recognised mendicant orders, with the right to hear confessions and to pronounce absolution in all cases except those expressly reserved to the Holy See, and to minister the sacraments of the church. The exact meaning of this authority is spelled out more fully in the bull *Inter Caetera* of 13 March 1456. It is to apply to all the regions south of Capes Bojador and Nam, throughout the whole of Guinea and beyond that the southern region as far as the Indies. This whole region is declared to be in no diocese; and all the rights of ordinary jurisdiction, including that of pronouncing excommunication, are transferred to the grand prior for the time being of the military Order of Christ.

This commission goes far beyond what is ordinarily understood under the term 'patronage'. The pope, the vicar of Christ, is appointing the king of Portugal, acting through the grand prior, as his vicar for the whole of the eastern region, with almost unlimited ecclesiastical power.

The process was not yet at an end. On 21 June 1481 Sixtus IV, in the bull *Aeterni regis clementia* summed up and confirmed all the privileges granted by previous popes to the crown of Portugal:

Navigation in the oceans of recent discovery is restricted to Portuguese ships. The Portuguese are the true lords (*veri domini*) of the lands discovered or yet to be discovered.

The Portuguese may freely trade with unbelievers, even Muslims, provided that they do not supply them with arms or anything of the kind.

The Portuguese crown may found and erect churches, monasteries and other places of religious usage; the clergy who minister in such places will have full power to minister the sacraments and to pronounce absolution. Spiritual power and authority from Capes Bojador and Nam as far as the Indies belongs to Portugal in perpetuity.

The kings of Portugal differed from one another in ability, as in the measure of their devotion to the church. On the whole, however, they showed marked fidelity to the principles laid down by Prince Henry the Navigator – the conversion of the unbelievers and the extension of the church are to be objects particularly to be cared for by the kings of Portugal in all their relations with the lands of the East, as far as the very limited resources available to them permitted.<sup>4</sup>

There was general agreement as to the rights and duties implicit in the existence of the *padroado*:

Portugal would exercise control over the dioceses, and this included keeping a watch on the finances provided for this purpose by the crown. The king of Portugal would present to the holy see, within a certain period, the prelates destined for these dioceses.

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The king would present to the bishops not only the canons of their cathedrals but also the parish priests, and all others receiving salaries from the royal provision. Where such nominations were accepted by ecclesiastical authority, the *padroado* involved in return the responsibility of the crown to preserve and maintain the various dioceses and the persons by whom they were served, and to care for the propagation of the faith.

The story of Portuguese missions in the East cannot be understood, unless the delicate balance of forces created by the bulls establishing the *padroado* is constantly borne in mind.

### 2 THE CHRISTIAN PIONEERS

The fleet of Vasco da Gama, which made the famous journey to India in 1498, was accompanied by two priests. It seems that one of the two died on the voyage; little is known with certainty of the later doings of the other. A precedent had been set; it can be taken for granted that almost all the many fleets which successfully made the long voyage to India would carry priests among their passengers. Some of these had received appointments as vicars, or as missionaries (the two appointments were quite distinct); a number remained in India of their own freewill, to join the ranks of those wandering priests who in later times were to cause a great deal of trouble to virtuous vicars general and bishops. The great majority returned to Portugal with the fleet when its business had been completed, and are heard of no more. The history of Western Christianity in India begins with the decision of the Portuguese to effect a settlement at Cochin.

The initial steps had been taken by Pedro Alvares Cabral in 1500 on the second voyage to India. The situation was consolidated by Vasco da Gama in 1502. To set up a factory was not enough; the factory must be strengthened by the erection of a fort; the Portuguese had come to stay and not merely to trade. The fort was a small and poor affair, adequately defensible only on the side of the sea. But it was there. The building was completed on 1 November 1503, and inaugurated by a solemn mass, the sermon being preached by Fr Domingo de Sousa, one of the three Dominicans who had accompanied da Gama on the voyage.<sup>5</sup> At the same time a church dedicated to St Bartholomew was erected. This was a small and insubstantial building; but it deserves mention as the first Christian building erected on the soil of India in modern times. About six hundred Portuguese were left behind – sailors, soldiers, officers and merchants – to man the fort and await the coming of the next fleet.

It was not long before difficulties began to arise between the foreigners and their new friends. The Portuguese were wholly unaware of the manners and customs of their Hindu neighbours, and were slow to learn. Good

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fortune has preserved for us a rather peevish letter from the rājā of Cochin to the king of Portugal, complaining of many and bitter wrongs committed against him and his people by the viceroy: 'but all these have I endured for love of your highness'. But the worst of all is to come – the viceroy 'has ordered the slaughter of many cows . . . and this is the greatest dishonour which can befall in our country'.<sup>6</sup> It was hardly to be expected that the meat-eating Portuguese would prefer local custom to their own. But by this unfortunate action they had stamped on themselves and their kind the mark of their position in the social scale; in India only those who, in the organisation of the Hindu caste system, were reckoned untouchables were eaters of beef; a fatal association had been formed between becoming a Christian and eating beef.

The number of clerics in India increased year by year with the arrival of successive fleets from Portugal. Cabral, we are told, was accompanied by one vicar, eight secular priests, eight Franciscans (Observants of the Province of Portugal), an organist, a 'chorist', and one lay brother. In 1501 four more Franciscans came to India, and in 1502 da Gama had Franciscans with him (the number is not specified). In 1503, Albuquerque brought with him five Dominicans, one of whom, Fr Rodrigo, was specially charged with the care of the Thomas Christians, many of whom had not been baptised.<sup>7</sup> Franciscans again come on the scene with Francis de Almeida in 1505.

Ecclesiastical authority over all the churches and missions in the East belonged, under the terms of the *padroado*, to the Order of Christ and to the king or his deputy as grand master of that Order. As early as 1498 the king had asked the pope to send an apostolic commissary to India. The pope authorised the king to nominate a person to hold this office, and undertook to send him to India with episcopal dignity, but for a period of one year only. It does not appear that this plan was ever carried out.<sup>8</sup>

What did take place was that the king appointed one of the priests already in India, or about to leave for India, as vicar general; there being as yet no bishop in India, this official exercised considerable authority, being in fact the 'ordinary' of the area; even after the creation of a bishopric in India something of this authority survived. Most of these vicars general are shadowy figures; three who stand out above the rest are perhaps deserving of mention.

Domingo de Sousa, who has been mentioned already as a friend of Albuquerque, took office in 1513. This simple and active man states in the one letter from him which has survived that he visited 'the forts' every year, not following in this the bad example of his predecessors, whose habit it was to remain in Cochin and to refuse the burden of visiting the fortresses and Christian communities of the Portuguese.<sup>9</sup>

Silva Pires held the office from 1521 to 1532, and is known to us from the



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lengthy letter which he addressed to the king and which has been preserved.<sup>10</sup> Pires seems to have been a man of diplomatic skill rather than of spiritual vigour. Many complaints against him were registered by his successor, specially in regard to his tolerating or even encouraging the irregularities in marriage which were a constant source of perplexity in all the Portuguese dominions. That successor was no less a person than Michael Vaz, who held the office with distinction from 1532 to 1547; he was the first great supporter of missionary work among the non-Christians, and even after the appointment of the first bishop of Goa played an important part in the administration of the diocese.

There are certain rites which, in the Roman Catholic as in other churches, cannot be carried out by a vicar general who is not in episcopal orders. The question of episcopal supervision was bound to arise at an early date.

The first solution was the sending out of bishops known in Portuguese by the pleasant title of 'bishops of the ring'. These were apostolic commissaries, sent out by the pope after nomination by the king of Portugal, in episcopal orders but without territorial jurisdiction. Of the three whose names are recorded, two hardly emerge from the mists of obscurity; of one, Duarte Nunes, bishop of Dume, we know a good deal from the letters which have survived.<sup>11</sup>

This bishop entertained austere, not to say unduly rigid, views as to the duty of Portugal in India.

He takes a stern attitude to the continuing existence of idolatry in the island of Goa, at the time of writing already a possession of the Portuguese crown:

It would be a service to God to destroy these temples, just in this island of Goa, and to replace them by churches with saints. Anyone who wishes to live in this island should become a Christian, and in that case may retain his lands and houses just as he has them at present; but, if he is unwilling, let him leave the islands . . . It may be that these people will not become good Christians, but their children will be . . . and so God will be served, and also your highness, by becoming the cause of salvation to so many lost souls.<sup>12</sup>

He takes a low view of the lives and morals of many of the clergy:

As regards the life of the clergy and friars who are outside the monasteries, for the most part they are very corrupt, and through their bad example the piety of the Christians of the country is gravely destroyed. So let your highness send some person of upright life and well instructed, to bring them to a better state. For, if this is not done, they will be of very little service to God or to your highness.<sup>13</sup>

The co-existence of various authorities, with no clear delimitation of responsibilities, was bound to lead to clashes and disagreements. We learn

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from Sebastian Pires, not a wholly reliable authority, that the bishop of Dume had fallen out with the vicar of Cochin, the charge against him being that he had exceeded the authority committed to him, and had interfered in matters of ecclesiastical administration which were none of his business. When the vicar took him to task,

the bishop came to Cochin, and one day preached, and said from the pulpit such unseemly things about the vicar and about the other clergy that all were much scandalised. But I, being in the city of Cochin before I took over the post of vicar, succeeded in getting them reconciled . . . I write this in order that I may not be blamed in the matter, for in the sight of God and of my own conscience it seems to me that it was the bishop who was to blame.<sup>14</sup>

One of the charges against the bishop was that he had conferred holy orders, which, since this was not included in his commission, he had no right to do. The bishop admits the charge, but defends himself by explaining very carefully the circumstances in which he had acted. When he was in Goa, three Franciscan brothers and one other cleric already in minor orders, John Roiz, were presented to him as being fully instructed, virtuous and ready for ordination. There was no possibility of their going to Portugal, and, as there was no other Catholic bishop in India, unless 'Dumensis'<sup>15</sup> acted they would have had to remain indefinitely unordained. He had agreed to ordain only when the acting guardian of the Franciscan convent showed him 'the bull of Pope Innocent, in which the Franciscans were given the special privilege of having their Brothers ordained by any bishop whom they might invite, even though he were not their diocesan bishop'. Knowing the consequences which might follow in that quarrelsome and litigious age, the bishop was careful to have drawn up the sworn testimony of several clerics to the effect that he had conferred orders in this one special case and in no others.<sup>16</sup>

### 3 THE BISHOPRIC OF GOA

Before long the reign of the bishops of the ring came to an end. It was clear that this could not be more than a temporary expedient, and could not meet the needs of a Christian community which was growing rapidly both through the arrival of Portuguese with every fleet and through the conversion of a steadily increasing number of Indians. Nothing less was required than the establishment of a regular episcopate for India.

The king had taken the first step with the creation in 1514 of the bishopric of Funchal in Madeira with jurisdiction over all Portuguese possessions in the East. The first bishop was Diogo Pinheiro, the last vicar of the vicariate of Tomar now dissolved. It was under a licence from the bishop of Funchal

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that the vicars apostolic in India carried out their duties. Now the pope was approached by Don Martinho, a cousin of the king of Portugal, with the request that Funchal should be raised to the dignity of an archbishopric, and that new sees should be created for the Azores, for the Cape Verde Islands, for San Tomé,<sup>17</sup> and for Goa. So reasonable a proposal met with ready acceptance at Rome, and the pope was prepared to act with less than the usual delay. The bull *Romani pontificis circumspectio*, raising Funchal to the rank of an archbishopric, was set forth by Pope Clement VII on 31 January 1533. Steps to create the diocese of Goa would have followed soon after but for an unexpected mishap. Francisco de Mello had been nominated as the first bishop of the new See. The appointment seemed to be in every way admirable; de Mello was an excellent scholar, about forty-two years of age, who had already had a distinguished career in diplomacy and in the church. His death, on 27 April 1533, just at the wrong moment, was a sad blow to the developing church in India.

The bull constituting the new diocese *Aequum reputamus*, was not set forth till 3 November 1534. The boundaries of the diocese of Goa were defined as being in one direction the Cape of Good Hope and in the other the kingdom of China, the archbishop of Funchal to exercise metropolitanical authority over the whole area. The new See was to be invested with all the dignity appropriate to the bishopric of a great capital city. It was to have, in addition to the bishop, a dean, an archdeacon, a cantor, a treasurer, a schoolmaster, and twelve canons.<sup>18</sup> A sufficient revenue was provided to enable the bishop to live in the state expected of the third man in the kingdom, who might at times be called upon to serve as acting viceroy. The duties devolving upon the *padroado* were defined as being the adaptation of the Church of St Catherine to serve as the cathedral of the city and diocese, the maintenance and improvement of divine worship in all the churches, chapels, convents and other places, providing them with vestments and the ornaments necessary for the performance of divine service, supplying them with adequate revenues, and maintaining personnel necessary for the carrying out of all these duties.

There was a further delay in the appointment of the first bishop. The choice at length fell upon D. John d'Albuquerque, a Franciscan. Some resistance was encountered in Rome, as the pope was at that time not much in favour of the appointment of members of the religious orders to bishoprics. But, on being assured that the candidate did not intend to be, as so many were, a non-resident bishop but proposed to go to India and to stay there, the pope gave way, and on 22 April 1537 Albuquerque received his letters of appointment. He was consecrated on 13 January 1538 by the bishop of San Tomé, assisted by the archbishop of Funchal and the bishop of Lamego.<sup>19</sup>

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John d'Albuquerque was a Spaniard by birth, but had come to Portugal as a young man.<sup>20</sup> He had been Franciscan provincial in the years 1528 to 1532. He had been confessor to King John III, and was therefore well known in court circles. He was universally esteemed, and to the end of his life was held in high regard for piety, humility and diligence. The only thing that could be said against him was that, at the time of his appointment, he was almost sixty years old and in somewhat feeble health.<sup>21</sup> It must have taken considerable courage for a man of his age to undertake so burdensome a task in a distant land and in an unhealthy climate.<sup>22</sup>

The bishop ruled his diocese prudently and benevolently until his death on 23 February 1553. In view of his age and infirmities, he was only rarely able to travel and to carry out visitations in other centres of Portuguese influence. He remained in Goa, diligent and attentive to business, while most of the work of travelling and visitation remained in the capable hands of his vicar general Michael Vaz.<sup>23</sup>

#### 4 CHAPLAINCIES AND PIOUS WORKS

Goa was, and continued for many years to be, the centre of Portuguese life in India both in church and state. But it was far from being the only place in which Portuguese influence was felt. Wherever the Portuguese were, there the church also took a hand.

This story must begin at Cochin, the first real settlement of the Portuguese in India, and the seat of government in the earliest years of their rule.

Here conversion advanced rather rapidly, but not in the most admirable of ways. As invariably happens, the presence of a large number of unmarried men drew to the encampment bands of the local women in search of a temporary or more permanent mate. On 20 December 1514 Pero de Mascarenhas, captain of the fort of Cochin, supplied a list of more than a hundred Indian women now married to Portuguese, and a further list of women who had borne children to Portuguese men without any regular form of marriage.<sup>24</sup> Of those who had married, the majority had also been baptised, partly no doubt to please their mates but also because this further measure of integration into the Portuguese community gave them a feeling of security. At that time it was the custom that every convert received a gold coin and a piece of cloth, ostensibly as compensation for the loss of family associations and employment suffered by those who became Christians.

The new Christians were immediately reckoned by the Hindus as outcastes, impure and not permitted to walk through the streets in areas which were under the jurisdiction of the *rājā* of Cochin. The same indignity was not imposed on those who had accepted the Muslim faith. Constant

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requests were made to the rājā to remove this inequality, but without success.

The king of Portugal hit upon an ingenious solution of the problem. All difficulties would be solved, if the rājā could be converted to the Christian faith. And who so well qualified to effect the conversion as the governor himself? Like talks to like. So, albeit somewhat unwillingly, the governor-catechist, as da Silva Rêgo piquantly calls him, took up the charge which had been laid upon him.<sup>25</sup> We have his own account of what passed between him and the rājā.<sup>26</sup> He opened the conversation by expressing the great affection which the king of Portugal felt for his Indian brother, and then raised the question of his salvation. The rājā replied that providence had appointed for him this piece of land called Malabar at the foot of the mountains, and desired that all who lived in that area should be Hindus (*gentios*) and follow their own customs. 'How could this be?' I asked, 'when there are so many communities of Christians and churches built just like ours? . . . The king knows well that our Lord sent his apostle and disciple to these parts, and that he converted many people to the faith, and lies buried here in India.' The king admitted that this was true. But what was now required of him was something entirely new, and demanded the most careful consideration. He wanted to have the friendship of the king of Portugal; but would this be an adequate compensation, if all his subjects rose against him and refused to have this man to rule over them? Needless to say, the rājā never became a Christian.

One achievement of these early days deserves special mention. The *arel*, or harbour master of Cochin, decided to become a Christian with all his relatives and dependents, amounting in all to more than a thousand persons. This is a pattern familiar in all intricately ordered societies, in which the decision of the head of the clan or group commits also all his family and followers. The Portuguese, unlike the rājā, welcomed this accession. The *arel* at his baptism received the name Antony Real, probably because the captain of Cochin of that name stood as his godfather. The Portuguese conferred on him the dignity of *fidalgo*, gentleman, and confirmed him in all the rights and privileges which he had enjoyed before his conversion. Naturally the rājā felt that a schism, a problem of divided loyalties, was being produced among his subjects.

The glowing achievements of the Jesuits later in the century have tended to cast all others into the shade. But the first missionaries in India in this period were the Franciscans. The secular clergy as a whole served as chaplains to the Portuguese; from the start the Franciscans were missionaries 'to the heathen'.

The first party of Franciscans arrived in India in 1500, headed by a

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notable leader Henry de Coimbra, with orders from the king that they should found three residences, one in Goa, one in Cochin, and one in a place to be determined by themselves. Fate was not kind to them. Henry returned to Portugal.<sup>27</sup> Two of the friars died in Calicut, and only two were left to take up residence in Cochin. The situation improved in 1517, when a further contingent of twelve friars arrived, under the leadership of Antony de Louro or Loureiro, who must be regarded as the real founder of Franciscan work in India.

The way of the Franciscans was not easy. On the one hand they were regarded with suspicion and dislike by the secular clergy, who had for the most part settled down to a comfortable and leisurely existence and felt themselves threatened by the simple life and evangelical fervour of the Franciscans. On the other hand, it was difficult not to become involved in the jealousies and rivalries of Portuguese life in India. When Antony de Louro arrived in Cochin to set up his residence, he found that the administrator of the settlement was one Diogo Pereira, a declared enemy of his friend Afonso d'Albuquerque; only direct reference to the king secured him the help that he needed. The Cochin residence came into being sometime between 1518 and 1522.

For many years the story is one of small numbers and many losses. In 1527 Fr Gonçalo de Lamego reports to the king that, of the thirteen who had been in India in the beginning, two who were preachers had died, six had returned to Portugal. In view of the small number of recruits coming from Portugal, the Franciscans in India had had recourse to the resources available in India, and had accepted as novices a number of young men of Portuguese origins born in India or of the mixed race (the question of admitting full-blooded Indians had not yet been raised). Many of those admitted were now fully instructed, and might be admitted to holy orders, if there were in India anyone competent to ordain them. Only in 1538 were the Franciscans joined by the man who was to shed special lustre on their work on the coast of Malabar, Fr Vincent de Lagos, of whose work for the Thomas Christians we shall have occasion to write later on.

In Goa things went rather better, especially after it had become the capital of the Portuguese enterprise in India.

Very soon after the capture of the island, Albuquerque gave orders for the construction of a church of Saint Catherine. At the start this was a mean edifice, with walls of lath and plaster and a thatched roof, but with adequate revenues through the transfer to it of the lands and revenues previously attached to the mosque of Goa.<sup>28</sup> Construction on a larger scale was begun in 1514, and before long we read of a large church with three naves, a transept, and three chapels with cupolas. In 1522 the bishop of Dume

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reports that as many as 600 persons would be present for mass on Sundays; but, if it rained, no one came, because of the water which descended through the leaky roof. The bell-tower seems not to have been added till 1542; it was this tower which caused irritation to the Franciscans as infringing the privacy of their convent.<sup>29</sup> Mention is also made of a small chapel 'of the Crucifixion', and of a chapel of 'Our Lady of the mountain', dedicated by Albuquerque in fulfilment of a vow made in a moment of great peril by shipwreck.

These churches and others which grew up together with the growth of the city were served by the secular clergy, who, having failed to learn any Indian language, settled down to minister only to the Portuguese and half-caste population. Fr A. Hounder SJ is perhaps too abrupt, when he calls these clergy briefly 'a scandal' (*Argernis*).<sup>30</sup> But there can be no doubt that a number of them were simply adventurers who had come to India in search of gain, or to avoid grave difficulties at home, and who had settled down in comfort and with little or no regard for the teeming population of non-Christians around them. So Francis Gonzaga had some grounds for writing that 'all that has been done for forty years in the East Indies on behalf of the sick, the non-Christians, the catechumens, and the converts, rested on the shoulders of the Franciscans'.<sup>31</sup> But he has yielded to the temptation, to which chroniclers are exposed, of magnifying the achievements of his own order; and he has overlooked two notable achievements of the church in India, for which the Franciscans were not specially responsible.

Da Silva Rêgo writes that 'in all the Portuguese settlements of the sixteenth century, the hospital was coeval with the factory and the church. This was a triad of which the members complemented one another.' So it is not surprising that as early as 24 January 1511 we find an order of Albuquerque instructing the factor of Goa to deliver to Fr John Alemão 'four *cotonias* for the benefit of the sick in the hospital'.<sup>32</sup> Similar notes recur through the entire series of documents which have been preserved from sixteenth-century Goa. This hospital was for the Portuguese; we shall have occasion later to note the care that was taken for the other inhabitants of the city.

Even more remarkable than the work of the hospital was that of the *Misericordia* of Goa. The original *Misericordia* of Lisbon had been founded in 1498, largely at the instance of the good Queen Eleanor. Its work was to include all forms of Christian charity; specified are giving food to the hungry, giving drink to the thirsty, clothing the naked, visiting the sick and the prisoners, giving shelter to the weary, ransoming captives, burying the dead. The brethren would be laymen, of whom it was required, in addition to being of pure blood, that they should be 'of good conscience and repute, obedient to God, modest, charitable and humble'. Da Silva Rego is almost

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certainly right in thinking that in India the initiative came not from official circles but from laymen who had settled down to make their home in India, and that the *Misericordia* in Goa came into existence not later than the year 1519.<sup>33</sup>

Professor C.R. Boxer, who is not inclined to be unduly favourable to Christian enterprise, pays to the *Misericordia* a tribute which is both judicious and generous:

The story of the *Misericordia* at Goa is one of the redeeming features of Portuguese imperialism in Asia, and one which had no parallel in other European Asiatic colonies until modern times. In succouring the needy and oppressed, befriending the orphan, and guarding the patrimony of the widow and the fatherless, the organization performed a truly merciful task, and performed it very well.<sup>34</sup>

It must be remembered, however, that in the sixteenth century no one of Asian blood was admitted to the brotherhood of the *Misericordia*, and that some time was to elapse before similar charitable care was extended to the Indian population.

#### 5 FOR THE CONVERSION OF THE INDIANS

The pioneer of evangelistic work among the non-Christians was the Franciscan friar Antony de Louro, who came to India for the second time in 1517. His first efforts were not without attendant difficulties. He had come provided with extensive authorisation from the king, and the right to choose the site for the convent which was to be built. But the governor, affirming that the city of Goa was limited in space and already provided with churches, desired to see the Franciscans in possession of a larger estate but at some distance from the city and not within it. This did not at all suit Fr Antony; such a site would not be convenient for his two main concerns – contact with the non-Christians, and administration of the sacraments for which a special privilege had been received from the pope.<sup>35</sup> Eventually the governor gave way, and the Franciscans were able to acquire a number of houses in the city on the site of which their convent was later erected.

Relations with the secular clergy were never easy. The Franciscans claimed that within a year they had, through their eager proclamation of the Gospel, converted 800 non-Christians, and could have converted many more but for the hindrances placed in their way by the secular clergy. If proper instruction was to be given to these large numbers of converts, it would be necessary to gather together both men and women within the convent for periods of instruction. This was a proposal to which the secular clergy would never give their consent.

The problem of keeping up numbers was ever present. Some of the friars,



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like the vicars, were sent for a period of only three years; these, in spite of the generally comfortable conditions in Goa, soon began to look westwards and to long for the day of their return. The Portuguese probably adapted themselves better to Indian conditions than those from more northerly lands. For all that the climate took a heavy toll in life and health. It was reported in a letter of 8 November 1532 that, in the fourteen years since the foundation of the convent, twenty friars had died in Goa alone. As in Cochin, so in Goa, the Franciscans were driven to the conclusion that, if India was to be evangelised, this must be the work of those born in the land, who would be able to work with full vigour and with a continuity that foreigners were hardly able to supply. Naturally most of the possible candidates would be *mestiços*, drawn from the increasingly large population of mixed origins. These might give evidence of some of the defects of a mixed race, but, having deep roots in the soil of India, they would not always be casting glances over their shoulders at a distant home, and would be nearer to their Indian fellow-countrymen than the Portuguese could ever be.

The acceptance of novices on the spot became a matter of controversy. In 1531 the superiors of the Observant Province in Portugal sent out an order forbidding the admission of novices in India. Fr Rodrigo da Serpa, commissary and guardian of the convent in Goa, immediately dispatched a strong protest to the king: the authorities in Portugal had promised that they would maintain the strength of the order with recruits from the home land, but in fact in the year 1532 not a single recruit had arrived. This being so, he had proceeded, in spite of the prohibition, to admit novices of the mixed race, and was writing urgently to the king for approval of his action.<sup>36</sup>

Rodrigo was only carrying out what had been the intention of Antony de Louro from the start, though the latter had probably been thinking rather in terms of candidates of pure Portuguese race.<sup>37</sup> He had written to the king for books. We have a fascinating list of books sent out by the king in 1517 and received by the Franciscans in India in 1518. The list includes, besides a considerable number of liturgical books and works of devotion, one Bible,<sup>38</sup> and three copies of the *Summa* of St Thomas Aquinas.<sup>39</sup> This single gift constituted what must be regarded as, for those days, a considerable library. This is the first indication in our documents of the part that books and theological literature were to play in missionary work in India.

Just at the end of the period dealt with in this chapter, the idea of a confraternity to be founded with the express aim of promoting the Christian faith through the training of an indigenous clergy was put forward with great emphasis and far greater effect by two of the most vigorous servants of the church at that time in India – Michael Vaz the vicar general and the secular priest Fr Diogo Borba. They communicated the idea to the bishop,

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the acting governor, the chief justice, and the secretary to the treasury, Cosme Anes.<sup>40</sup> The proposal was eagerly accepted. On 14 December 1541 Michael Vaz with five other signatories wrote to the king sending him the statutes of the confraternity, requesting him to confirm the grant of financial support from the revenues of the temples which at the time were in process of being destroyed, and inviting him to become, 'for the service of God and for the augmentation of the holy faith' protector of the new institution.<sup>41</sup> The work was to be carried on in two parts. First there was to be the Confraternity of the Holy Faith, and with this was to be associated the College of St Paul, so called in honour of the apostle of the Gentiles.<sup>42</sup>

Work began promptly. By June 1542 Fr Borba was in residence with sixty pupils, drawn somewhat at random from Goa and its environs. We must not be misled by the term 'college'. Education in Portuguese India was in its infancy. The college was at best what would later be called a minor seminary, and its first beginnings were on a very modest scale. Gaspar Correa seems to tell the truth, when he informs us that Fr Borba picked up young people on their giving promise of industry, set them to live in community, began to teach them to read and write, and later embarked on Latin and other subjects in the curriculum.

Michael Vaz intended to link the college to the Franciscan convent, for two reasons: first, he thought it better for the boys to be brought up by members of a religious order rather than by secular priests, even though these might be men of virtuous life; secondly, because a monastery is a corporation which never dies, and could be counted on at all times to supply one or two men of good quality as teachers.<sup>43</sup> An attempt to bring Fr Vincent de Lagos up from his successful work in the seminary at Cranganore was unsuccessful. Disagreements in the Franciscan ranks led to confusion, and their help was withdrawn almost before it had been given. The situation was saved only by the arrival of the Jesuits and their agreement to take over the college and to make it the headquarters of their work in the East.

### 6 THE SECULAR CLERGY AND THEIR WORK

Of the Portuguese settlements other than Goa and Cochin there is not much to be recorded. Vicars were appointed with considerable regularity, generally like the royal officials for a period of three years. But most of them are shadowy figures, known to us only from one or two letters that have survived. A few details may be recorded, as giving some idea of the range and variety of Portuguese, and of Christian, expansion during the period under review.

For the year 1514 the vicar of Cannanore, Affonso Velho, gives an

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interesting analysis of the Indian Christians to be found in that centre.<sup>44</sup> Apart from a hundred married Portuguese, there was a total of 344 persons; of these 85 had been Muslims, 8 had been Nāyars; with these were to be counted 22 children; 160 came from the lower castes, 'tybas'<sup>45</sup> and macuas', together with thirty-three children. There were 13 children of Portuguese who had married local women, and 24 children of unmarried Portuguese who had formed irregular connections with slaves or other women of the town. The vicar reports that many more could have been converted, if the governor had not forbidden the baptism of slaves of Hindu or Muslim owners on the ground that such baptisms were likely to lead to quarrels with the legal owners; moreover the indigence of slaves who came over in this way, having lost such livelihood as they had, put an intolerable strain on the exchequer of the fortress. In any case such conversions were not likely to be sincere.

The Portuguese were master-hands at piling up documents. Everyone had to have documents, and woe betide the man or woman who had no documents, or had lost them, or failed to produce them when required. Some documents which have survived reveal to us the entertaining story of the vicar who arrived to take possession of the church of Cannanore to which he had been appointed in due form, only to find that it was occupied by another vicar who refused to be ejected. The newcomer had presented his credentials to the bishop of Funchal, who had confirmed the appointment and received ten cruzados as his fee. But Affonso Fernandes claimed that he and the other clergy of Cannanore had been appointed not for three years but in perpetuity, and that this had been confirmed by the bishop. In a letter to the king of 10 October 1523, Fernandes quotes the actual document of his appointment in the following terms:

We ordain that the vicar and the portionists [clergy receiving a part of the revenues] shall hold their portions in perpetuity and shall not be limited to the period of three years . . . nor shall they be transferred or removed from the said office of vicar or other offices except in the case that they have committed such crimes as would cause them in due process of law to be removed or suspended, their plea having first been heard in proper legal form.

We do not know the end of this intricate story. It is interesting to observe that each of the contending priests took it for granted that he had the right of access to the king in person.<sup>46</sup>

Mylapore, close to St Thomas Mount and the reported place of the martyrdom of the apostle, was pleasantly different from the other Portuguese settlements in India. It was the Cheltenham of the East, inhabited largely by veterans from the Portuguese services, who had settled there to find rest for their declining days and perhaps to take advantage of

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the facilities for trade which the area offered. The climate is more agreeable than that of the west coast, experiencing only the short north-east monsoon. An article on 'The Portuguese settlement in Mylapore' by Fr A.M. Mundadan confirms this picture.<sup>47</sup> He quotes John de Barros as recording that 'Meliapor, which is now called by our men San Thomè, is inhabited by our war veterans in magnificent buildings. They were attracted to the place by the abundance of land that can be obtained there, by the prosperous trade which is being carried on there, but above all by the memory of the apostle Thomas.'<sup>48</sup> Mundadan adds that 'there was no dearth of priests, as many liked to go to Mylapore for reasons of health'.<sup>49</sup>

The discoveries at the site of the alleged tomb of the apostle had aroused great interest both in India and in Europe, and it was natural that some should decide to settle in that hallowed area. The governor sent to Mylapore a 'priest of good life', Alvaro Penteado, to take charge of the work there. This man, filled with grandiose ideas for the building up of a 'monastery for religious' at the foot of the mount, went to Goa and even as far as Portugal to give the king the most exact information about the famous 'house of St Thomas'. After two years absence, back came Penteado in 1526, and by his own account took steps to guard the relics of the apostle against possible disrespectful treatment by hiding them in the high altar of the church so secretly that no one could possibly find them.

It is not easy to make a general assessment of the character of the secular clergy of that time. Four sources of discontent appear constantly in the complaints made against them – laziness, ignorance, licentiousness, and the tendency to seek worldly gain. But many of these complaints come from visiting bishops or from members of the religious orders. Jealousy between regulars and seculars has been a recurring feature of church history. The seculars resented the privileges granted by successive popes to the religious orders. The regulars contrasted unfavourably the laxity of the seculars with their own more rigid standards. There was some justification on the side of the religious orders. In one of the rare cases of delinquency recorded, the erring Franciscan was subjected to a severity of treatment which would hardly have been expected had he belonged to the secular clergy.<sup>50</sup>

We are still in the pre-Tridentine period. At that time the ordinary parish priest in Europe received little preparation for his work beyond the minimum of Latin required for the carrying out of the services of the church; in some cases even that knowledge seems to have been deficient. It was not expected that the parish priest should preach, that duty being ordinarily left to the preaching orders, the Franciscans and Dominicans. The Western requirement of celibacy caused difficulty even in the settled societies of Europe; far more so when single men were living alone and isolated, wearied by an unfavourable climate, and in a society in which

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concubinage was almost universal. It is hardly to be wondered at that sexual continence was so rare as in a number of cases to be specially noted in the records.

Yet da Silva Rêgo, who has a wide knowledge of all the records, ends his account with the words: 'To sum up, it may be affirmed that the Portuguese clergy in the East were superior, as regards their conduct, to the clergy of metropolitan Portugal. This was demanded by the honour of the church, the good of religion, and the reputation of Portugal as a missionary power.'<sup>51</sup> He adds that in general priests or other ecclesiastics of evil life or example were sent back to Portugal as undesirables.<sup>52</sup>

One of the major problems that had to be faced was the almost pathological refusal of the Portuguese to learn any Indian language. In the second half of the century some went so far as to recommend the elimination of the Indian languages and their total replacement by a *lingua franca*, in this case of course Portuguese.<sup>53</sup> These plans, fortunately, led to nothing. Moreover, clear instructions were issued from Rome, and accepted by the authorities in India, that no priest was to be appointed to any parochial charge unless he could speak the local language.<sup>54</sup> But Henry Henriques and Thomas Stephens were still far in the future. In the early days the Portuguese, regulars and seculars, vicars and missionaries alike, spoke Portuguese, and had hardly any acquaintance with any other language.

It is impossible not to sympathise with them. For Europeans to master Malayalam, the language of Kerala, is a task not to be lightly or unadvisedly undertaken. Konkani is easier; but to tackle any unknown language, when neither grammar nor dictionary exists, is a formidable undertaking. It seemed easier to trust to the race of interpreters which was not slow in coming into being.

This did not matter so much in the early days, when there were no Indian Christians (except for the Thomas Christians) and ministrations were mainly for the benefit of the Portuguese. As the mixed race grew and multiplied, it is to be supposed that the children were to some extent bilingual, though the Portuguese which they learned from their fathers might have caused raised eyebrows in Lisbon or Coimbra. The women who were living with Portuguese men must have acquired some facility in communication. In this field the Portuguese-speaking priest may have managed to make himself fairly well understood. He could always count on an audience. Attendance at catechism classes was compulsory, and women could be fined for non-attendance even though they already knew the catechism by heart. In Cochin, if nowhere else, a woman was appointed to watch over regularity of attendance, and to collect the fines from those who were negligent.<sup>55</sup> Perhaps as a result of these somewhat Draconian methods, as early as 1518 Sebastian Pires could report to the king that in the

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city of Cochin there were women who knew by heart the commandments, the articles of faith, the works of mercy, and other things which are necessary to the soul's salvation. They also made their confession, and arranged for masses to be said.<sup>56</sup>

Unfortunately Pires does not tell us whether the women had learned these things by rote in Portuguese, or whether an explanation in Malayalam had been provided. The most difficult situation of all arose, naturally, in the hearing of confessions. If a confession made in the presence of a priest who did not know the language was to be more than nominal, provision for interpretation was indispensable; yet in so delicate a matter the presence of a third party could not but be gravely embarrassing. The true solution of this problem was reached only many years later with the formation of a cadre of well-trained Indian priests.<sup>57</sup>

We do hear at intervals of priests preaching the Gospel to non-Christians and winning converts by these means. But such sermons must have been delivered through interpreters, and this is always a hazardous business. Even well-intentioned interpreters, if unfamiliar with the Christian content of the discourse, might miss the meaning and give a distorted account of what was intended. Really good interpreters are few and far between. This defect could not be remedied, until the college of St Paul had become a popular and flourishing institution, able to supply as interpreters pupils who were genuinely bilingual.

In the majority of the places occupied by the Portuguese – Cochin, Tuticorin, Negapatam – they existed only through the favour of the local ruler who had given them permission to erect forts and factories. Indian Christians continued to be subjects of the Indian rulers. This led to many difficulties, as such rulers tended to be capricious rather than consistent in their attitudes. But, in spite of the difficulties involved, the number of Christians seems to have grown rapidly. Sebastian Pires in a letter dated 8 January 1518 reports to the king of Portugal that there are in the neighbourhood of Cochin from ten to twelve thousand Christians. He does not distinguish between Thomas Christians and recent converts; but, since the Portuguese at that time had only limited contact with the Thomas Christians, he is probably referring to those who had become Christians since the coming of the Westerners.<sup>58</sup>

By this time the Portuguese were beginning to understand, though as yet very imperfectly, the Hindu caste system. In the same letter Pires notes that, besides the Nāyars and the Brāhmins who are of honourable rank, there are others less honourable, among them the people called Izhavas, the majority of whom are by now Christians. This is, if true, extremely interesting. The Izhavas are to this day a large and thriving community in Kerala, in some

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areas making up twenty per cent of the population. Their main occupation, though many of them are sturdy agriculturalists, is drawing the sweet juice from the palm trees, making toddy and distilling arrack. For this reason they are not well thought of by the higher castes; though not untouchable they were not admitted to the Hindu temples, and were ministered to by priests of their own caste. If Pires is right, the movement to which he refers cannot have been more than local, since the majority of the Izhavas to this day are Hindus.<sup>59</sup>

#### 7 THE PORTUGUESE AND THE NON-CHRISTIAN RELIGIONS

The numbers of converts to Christianity were never overwhelming, but seem to have been considerable in the early days.

The presence of a strong and neutral power presented itself as a favouring portent to many of the lower castes, suffering as they did from the depredations of robbers and pirates and subject to the capricious actions of hereditary rulers. It was not always the case that those who accepted foreign protection became Christians; but in some cases at least the Portuguese made the acceptance of baptism a condition for the granting of protection. It was laid down by law that every resident of Goa living with an Indian woman was under obligation to teach his wife, or slave, the *Paternoster* and the *Ave Maria*, and to place no hindrance in the way of her becoming a Christian 'according to our law'.<sup>60</sup> The women seem in most cases to have made no difficulty about being baptised, and so the Christian community grew.

Even where the Portuguese were in control, there was nothing like a settled policy of forcible conversion; the general policy of the new rulers was tolerant within the limits of what were in those days regarded as the duties of a Christian king.

In the sixteenth century the view almost universally held by Christians was that idolatry was abomination, calculated to call down the wrath of God upon any king who permitted it in his dominions. From the start, therefore, it was laid down that no idol was to be seen in public, that no processions in which idols were carried were to pass through the streets, and that there was to be no public performance of Hindu ceremonies. Beyond this, the Portuguese, like some though not all Muslim rulers, do not seem to have interfered with the faith and practice of their non-Christian fellow-subjects. The capture of Goa was followed by a panic, in which many Hindus fled to the mainland. But, as settled conditions returned and it was found that life could go on very much in its accustomed channels, the great majority of them came back. The Portuguese needed them, for the cultivation of the fields, as servants and sailors, and in all the lower echelons of the business

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enterprise. To a large extent the new rulers were prepared to take over the administrative methods of the old, and to govern the people in the ways to which they had long been accustomed.

In 1511 a Portuguese physician named Tomé Pires came to India, and at intervals during the period between 1512 and 1515 wrote an account of his experiences in a work called *Suma Oriental*.<sup>61</sup> His account of the Hindus of Goa does not leave on the mind the impression that they had been subjected to any severe persecution:

There are a great many heathens in this kingdom of Goa . . . Some of them are very honoured men with large fortunes; and almost the whole kingdom lies in their hands, because they are natives and they possess the land and they pay the taxes. Some of them are noblemen with many followers and lands of their own, and are persons of great repute, and wealthy, and they live on their estates, which are very gay and fresh . . . They have beautiful temples of their own in this kingdom; they have priests or Brahmins of many kinds . . . these Brahmins are greatly revered throughout the country, particularly among the heathen . . . They are clever, prudent, learned in their religion. A Brahmin would not become a Mohammedan [even] if he were made a king.<sup>62</sup>

There are many ways of helping people to become Christians. If the Portuguese did not coerce their subjects, they regarded it as quite legitimate to entice them. Favour could be shown to Christians and denied to those who had decided to remain as they were. As the number of Christians increased, it was easy to insinuate them into positions of trust and profit.

Yet, when every allowance has been made for mixed and unworthy motives, it remains true that the Christian faith as practised by the Portuguese exercised in itself a strong attractive power, especially as the old Hindu ways of worship became less available. The Portuguese clergy did everything that they could to make the Christian faith and its festivals splendid and memorable. A Hindu woman, entering a Christian church for the first time, would not be able to understand a single word; but the atmosphere, with pictures and statues, processions and the ever present smell of incense, might not seem too different from that to which she had been accustomed in a Hindu temple; things were permitted here, in a new and Christian form, which were now forbidden in their Hindu guise. For those of higher caste the loss of caste-status involved in conversion must have been a great barrier in the way of a change of faith; for those of lower status, adoption of the Portuguese way may well have seemed to be a kind of promotion. The regular habit of conferring Portuguese names at baptism made assimilation all the easier.<sup>63</sup>

For a generation the Portuguese attitude towards the old faiths had been in the main tolerant. The clear evidence for this is that, after thirty years of



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Portuguese rule, the majority of the inhabitants of the islands were still Hindus or Muslims. In consequence, the pace of conversion seemed to a number of pious Christians to be much too slow. Other times were about to begin, with the introduction of more rigorous codes of proceeding against the survival and the survivors of the ancient regime. At the end of the sixteenth century, Francis Paes, an official of the treasury in Goa, coined the term 'the rigour of mercy', to characterise the method by which the Christianisation of the Goa Islands was now to be advanced.<sup>64</sup> The chief actors in the process were the two leaders whose zeal and devotion have already been mentioned – Michael Vaz the vicar general and Diogo Borba, who had come to India in the retinue of the first bishop of Goa. These two, convinced that the continued existence of the Hindu shrines was the major obstacle to the process of conversion, decided on nothing less than the destruction of all the shrines. As there were in all probability more than a hundred of these,<sup>65</sup> the destruction of them all was a considerable enterprise.

The manner in which the work was carried out remains obscure. Michael Vaz, in the immensely long letter which he wrote to the king on 6 January 1543, does no more than mention with high commendation Fabian Gonçalves of the household of Francis Melo, who had accompanied him on his apostolic missions, and had shewn such zeal that 'by his hands were destroyed and pulled down all the pagodas and houses of idolatry that were to be found in Goa'.<sup>66</sup> The account given by Gaspar Correa, though circumstantial, must be regarded as improbable in the extreme. He writes: 'Master Diogo and his collaborators persecuted so much the houses of the idols and their ministers, and caused among them such dissensions, lawsuits and evils, that the Gentiles [Hindus] themselves of their own accord eventually pulled down and demolished the houses of the idols.'<sup>67</sup> However it may have been accomplished and by whom, there is no doubt that the operation was thorough. In 1545 the Jesuit Nicolas Lancilotto could record that, at the time of his arrival in Goa, there were no longer any temples to be seen.<sup>68</sup>

The shrines had been destroyed. The question remained as to what was to be done with the revenues by which the temples had been maintained.

What followed is not easy for twentieth-century man to understand. The sixteenth century still lived in the intensely litigious and legalistic tradition of the middle ages. The general view relating to trusts, donations and endowments was that, if such a trust could no longer be administered in the terms originally laid down, it could be terminated by authority, and in that case the property would return to the original donors or their heirs, or if these could not be discovered, the estate would be escheated to the sovereign, who would then assign the revenue to a use as near as possible to

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that intended by the original donors. This was the doctrine found useful, in the period with which we are dealing, by Henry VIII of England and Thomas Cromwell in their concerns with the monasteries of that country.

Ferdinand Rodrigues de Castello-Branco, acting governor in the absence of the governor Stephen da Gama, seems to have held a view slightly different from that expounded above. In a lengthy document, dated 30 June 1541, we are given an unusually clear and detailed account of what took place.<sup>69</sup> The acting governor called together twenty-eight persons, being the headmen (*gançares*) of fifteen villages and two small islands, together with the Brāhman Krishṇa,<sup>70</sup> the chief collector of taxes (*tanador-mor*), and Locu and Gopu (this is the Portuguese spelling of the names), leading Brāhmans of Goa. The purpose for which they had been convened was explained to those present; as the shrines no longer existed, no further expenses could be incurred in relation to them. It was therefore the desire of the authorities to make good use of the money in accordance with the goodwill of the king of Portugal towards his Indian subjects. In Goa there were many churches, as well as the hospital and the *Misericordia*; but these were used only for the benefit of the Portuguese, and nothing had yet been done directly for the benefit of the Indian part of the population. Now was the time to take action. The Confraternity of the Holy Faith and the College of St Paul had been called into existence exclusively for the benefit of the Indians. Could he hope that the *gançares* would of their own freewill surrender the revenues formerly attached to the temples for these new and excellent purposes? The original donors could not now be identified. The old spiritual aims having fallen by the wayside, did it not seem suitable that the money should be used for other spiritual aims approved by the new regime?<sup>71</sup>

Some wrangling followed as to the exact terms on which the temple lands were held, and whether or not by the Portuguese conquest these lands did become the property of the king. But in the end the opposition was borne down, and the *gançares* 'voluntarily agreed to pay to the Confraternity annually the sum of 2,000 white *tangas*'. The total revenue of the temples was reckoned to be 780 *pardãos*. It was agreed that the confraternity should retain the first 300 *pardãos* of revenue for the service of the college and of the house; the remainder was to be used without any deduction for the service of the churches and chapels, built or to be built, in the villages and islands of the Portuguese possessions.<sup>72</sup> Twelve churches and chapels are named as eligible to receive aid from the fund; but it is specifically stated that these are sufficient for the existing population, and that, if other churches and chapels are later built, they will not be so eligible.<sup>73</sup> If no chaplains have as yet been appointed to these churches or chapels, they are now to be appointed. The duties of chaplains are carefully laid down. The document looks forward to

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the time when there will be priests *naturais desta terra*; such should be appointed as chaplains of the country churches, 'since from this the people of the land would receive greater contentment, and would accept the instructions from them with greater goodwill, both by reason of the language, and because they are akin to them by birth'.<sup>74</sup>

It is to be noted that similar methods for the diversion of temple revenues to Christian purposes were used in other Portuguese conquests of later date.<sup>75</sup>

Many religious orders, other than the Franciscans, have contributed to the Christian history of India, and have rendered notable services. But a comparison of dates shows that for the period dealt with in this chapter, there is hardly anything to record. The Jesuits arrived in 1542. There are one or two notices of Dominicans, one from as early as 1503; but it was not until 1548 that the initiative and the generosity of the king of Portugal enabled the Dominicans to establish themselves in Goa in strength which they maintained for many years. The Augustinians, later to be distinguished by their special concern for work among Muslims and their pioneer work in Bengal, did not arrive till 1572. Of the Theatines and the Carmelites there are no notices from the sixteenth century. The burden and heat of the day in these difficult years was borne by the secular clergy and the Franciscans. As far as care for the Indian inhabitants of the land was concerned, the lion's share of honour goes to the Franciscans.

## 7 · The Jesuits and the Indian Church

### I THE JESUITS ENTER THE SCENE

On 6 May 1542 Francis Xavier and a small party of companions landed at Goa. The Jesuits had arrived.

The Society of Jesus was different from any other religious order, but not as different as is sometimes supposed. H.O. Evannett has pointed out that 'the various bodies of clerks regular were the outstanding creation of sixteenth-century Catholicism in the sphere of the religious orders'.<sup>1</sup> Notable among these new orders were the Theatines, who arrived in India at a later date than the Jesuits (1646).<sup>2</sup> The Theatines were neither monks nor friars nor canons. They were a body of pastoral priests living together, having taken the monastic vows of poverty, chastity and obedience, in order to live the apostolic priestly life in as perfect a manner as possible. While not accepting the official charge of either parishes or hospitals, they were busy in preaching, in hearing confessions and exhorting to the more frequent reception of the sacraments, in charitable works for the sick and the distressed, in study and especially in preparing for the reform of the liturgy.<sup>3</sup>

Ignatius Loyola had known the Theatines in Venice in 1536-7, and clearly had learned much from them. But on everything that he did Loyola, that strange combination of the Chevalier Bayard and Don Quixote, stamped the marks of his highly individual genius. He, like many of his followers, was the perfect medieval man. Evannett has written of him that 'no one could be less truly called a "child of the Renaissance" than Ignatius, who had long and decisively rejected the Erasmian outlook'.<sup>4</sup> He had encountered both the Renaissance and the Reformation in his student years at Paris, and had come to a deep detestation of them both. Nothing in the doctrine or life of the church was to be changed. The pope was to be the head and protector of this immutability, and to the pope was to be dedicated the special loyalty of his Society as it came into being.

On 27 September 1540, in the Bull *Regimini Militantis Ecclesiae* the pope gave formal recognition to the new society. From its beginnings the Jesuit

## *Xavier – Rome via Lisbon to Goa*

Order was disliked and suspected by the conservative elements in the church. Its members were neither regulars nor seculars. They were activists and not contemplatives. The Jesuit was freed from the obligation to a common recitation of the divine office. He would not live in a cloister, and might even be exempted from the limitations of a life shared in common with his brethren. He would go wherever he was sent with a total disregard for personal safety or comfort. This might mean living for long periods quite alone, though this was avoided when possible. Such a wide departure from the principles of monasticism was a great stumbling-block to conservative critics, who chose to see in this special policy for a special society something 'of Erasmian humanism or even of Protestantism'.<sup>5</sup> But it was only this flexibility which made possible the achievements of the society in India and the Far East.

As soon as the society began to move out into various fields of work, Ignatius realised that correspondence, of the members with the head and of the members with one another, was the only instrument by which a network of life-lines could be created, and that without these the society as a fellowship would perish. It was expected that every Jesuit would write to the general of the society in Rome and would tell of his doings.<sup>6</sup> From the time of their foundation Jesuits have been unbridled correspondents, and experts in the creation of archives.<sup>7</sup> Much has been lost; but with the help of the letters that have survived it is possible to construct an almost day to day narrative of the early period of the missions in Asia, and to relive the experiences of that now distant age.

The earlier letters are for the most part short, written in haste without the least regard to grace of language and style, their format not improved when the surviving copy was made by a lay brother whose education left much to be desired. Gradually the Jesuit letters become longer, and show more concern for style. One of the best of our correspondents, the aristocrat Luis Fróis, who wrote excellent Portuguese and was later to be the historian of the mission to Japan, ends the first of his letters with the remark: 'if you should feel that by the superfluity of this letter I have overstepped due limits, please attribute it to the great love in Christ our Lord which I have for you in the depths of my soul'.<sup>8</sup>

## 2 XAVIER – ROME VIA LISBON TO GOA

Don Francisco de Jassu y Xaver,<sup>9</sup> better known to the English-speaking world as Francis Xavier, was born on 7 April 1506 at the castle of Xavier in Navarre. His family, like that of Ignatius Loyola, belonged to the minor Basque nobility of that region. Today the castle lies outside that part of Navarre in which Basque is spoken; but it was not always so, and it is almost

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certain that the first language which the saint spoke was Basque. As he lay on his deathbed in the island of Sancian off the coast of China, according to the report of his faithful Chinese servant Antonio who knew both Spanish and Portuguese, 'he said many things which I could not understand, for they were not in our language . . . and he continued speaking with the greatest fervour for the space of five or six hours and the name of Jesus was never lacking on his lips'.<sup>10</sup> The unknown language can hardly have been other than Basque.

In 1525 Xavier left his home to study at the university of Paris. In 1529 Ignatius Loyola, already thirty-eight years old, arrived to begin his studies, and almost at once made the acquaintance of Xavier. According to Polanco, at the first meeting Basque was not attracted by Basque. But Loyola, perhaps having from the first detected the qualities latent in his fellow-countryman, set himself to win him over, though, as reported by Polanco, he later remarked that 'Xavier was the most stubborn dough that he had ever kneaded.'<sup>11</sup> So it came about that, when seven friends went on 15 August 1534 to the little chapel of the Martyrdom on Montmartre to take certain solemn vows, Xavier was one of them.

This was just the time at which King John III of Portugal was asking for excellent priests to supplement the exiguous forces that Portugal had been able to send to the great dominions overseas. His attention was drawn to the little group of men, who cannot yet be called Jesuits, and he instructed his ambassador in Rome, Peter Mascarenhas, to make further inquiry about them. The ambassador's report was most favourable; Nicolas Bobadilla and Simon Rodriguez had already been appointed for service in India. As things worked out, neither of these two ever reached India. Bobadilla returned from Naples to Rome so seriously ill that he could not be considered for service overseas. Rodriguez got as far as Lisbon, but was detained there at the earnest wish of the king. Thus it was only by chance that Xavier's name came forward on the list of possible candidates. Ignatius was very unwilling to let go the man who had become bound to him by ties of special friendship and had for a time acted as his secretary. But at last consent was given; and, after long delays in Lisbon, on 7 April 1541 Xavier was able to put to sea *en route* for India. His party was very different from what he had imagined and planned. His attempts to find recruits in Portugal were almost completely unsuccessful. A young priest Paul of Camerino had volunteered for India and had been accepted. Xavier was able to take with him a boy named Diogo Fernandes, a relative of Simon Rodriguez, and a young man named Francis Mansilhas whose name will recur frequently in our narrative. Of little education and less capacity, Mansilhas was to become the object of Xavier's tender pastoral care, and at the same time a perpetual thorn in his side.

The conditions under which Xavier went to India must be clearly

understood. He had been commissioned by the king of Portugal who, apart from his personal regard for Xavier, was bound under the terms of the *padroado* to support him in his work. At all times he had access to the king, and was able on a number of occasions to write to him with considerable freedom. He had been appointed by the pope as legate to all the countries east of the Cape of Good Hope; this gave him considerable authority in an area in which at that time there was no more than a single bishop.<sup>12</sup> His relations with Loyola were always intimate. The society was very new. Ignatius had laid down in 1539 certain basic principles; but the Constitution of the society was not clearly drawn up until 1555, and Xavier had already been dead for a number of years before these rules reached India. Consequently his authority was very great; but organisation was not his greatest talent, and it is at least possible that the stability of Jesuit work in the East would have been greater, if he had spent more time at headquarters and less on his bold wanderings about the eastern world.

To a considerable extent the shape of Xavier's missionary work was determined by this threefold authority. Personally the most modest of men, his imagination was fired by the progress of Portuguese discovery and by the thought of lands and empires to be brought within the kingdom of Christ. He had not gone out to be the supervisor of a little handful of Jesuits in a small corner of India. His own temperament may have been restless; but there is a certain magnificence in a restlessness which led him to contain within a single glance India and the Moluccas, Japan, and, even beyond Japan, China.

Voyages from Lisbon to India at that time were always terrible. That on which Xavier sailed was worse than most; the ship which left for India on 7 April 1541 took him no further than Moçambique; it was not till 6 May 1542 that he finally landed at Goa. The voyage gave him and his companions every opportunity to manifest themselves as true servants of Christ in their ceaseless care for the sick and for the dying. Alexander Valignano, who had not known Xavier personally but who took immense trouble to collect information from those who had, and whose *History* is one of the main sources for all subsequent lives of Xavier,<sup>13</sup> has this to say of him at this period of his service:

They spent all their time in ceaseless works of mercy and charity, giving an example of great humility and patience, specially Brother Francis, who behaved with such disregard of himself that he seemed more like an ordinary seaman than a man of great reputation, performing the meanest office which was to be found in it . . . Moreover through the great prudence and easy style of conduct which the Father maintained, it was very easy for him to make himself in a certain manner master of the hearts of all . . . And by these means he won such a high opinion and reputation

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among the Portuguese that he was by all held and reputed to be a saint. In conversation he was easy and very lively . . . in such manner that even those who were deeply sunk in grave sins and who hated to make contact with good and religious persons, were happy to make contact and to converse with Master Francis; and he on his part took such advantage of this opportunity that within a short time they found themselves much changed from what they had been before.<sup>14</sup>

The governor Martin Affonso de Sousa, who with Xavier was one of the passengers on the ship *Santiago*, growing weary of the long delay at Moçambique, suddenly decided to take advantage of the arrival from India of a small merchantman, the *Coulam*, and to sail ahead of his fleet without waiting for the more favourable winds of the south-west monsoon. To sail at such a season in an unarmed vessel involved considerable risk; but luck was with the governor, who had insisted on Xavier accompanying him perhaps as a kind of mascot for the voyage. Stops were made only at Malindi and at Socotra, where Xavier found Christians in a state of extreme ignorance.

At last the interminable voyage was over. In his first letter dated 20 September 1542,<sup>15</sup> he expresses himself as consoled and delighted by what he found:

After more than four months we arrived in India, at Goa, a city wholly inhabited by Christians, a sight really worthy to be seen. There is a convent with many friars of the order of St Francis,<sup>16</sup> and a splendid cathedral with many canons, and many other churches. It is a thing for which great thanks ought to be offered to God, that the name of Christ flourishes so in such distant lands and among so many unbelievers.<sup>17</sup>

It is easy both to sympathise with the first enthusiasm of Xavier and to admit that he had ruefully to learn that in many respects his first impressions had been mistaken. Even in the city itself, and still more in the villages, there were still many Hindus and Muslims. And he was to learn that the level of Christian life among both Portuguese and recent converts was very low.

One of the first duties incumbent on Master Francis was that of paying a visit to the bishop. The visitor informed the prelate that Pope Paul III and the king of Portugal had sent him to India to help the Portuguese, to instruct the converts, and to devote himself to the conversion of unbelievers. He spread out before the bishop the royal letters, and the brief in which the pope had appointed him as apostolic nuncio; but he added that he wished to regard himself as in every way subject to the bishop, and that he would not make any use of his special privileges except such as the chief shepherd of the area could regard as appropriate. The bishop, moved by such humility, gave back the letters, and bade Francis make such use of his privileges as he desired. From that time on the two were united by bonds of deep affection.<sup>18</sup>



The second visit was to the vicar general Michael Vaz Coutinho. Since 1533 Vaz had been the chief administrative officer of the church in India. Almost every reference to him in the sources is laudatory; he was a man of perfect probity and of vigour and enterprise. This was a man after Francis' own heart; with him also he remained on terms of close friendship.<sup>19</sup>

The third visit had inevitably to be paid to the registrar of the city, Cosme Anes, the second most important layman in the colony. This excellent man had come to India in 1538. In 1546 he married the daughter of the chancellor Don Francis Toscano, and settled down to make India his home until his death in 1560. He seems to have been the real imperialist of his day, a Dupleix before his time; he dreamed of a great Portuguese empire in India – if only one or two kings could be subdued. But, in addition to eager devotion to the cause of his earthly king, he was also deeply concerned about the kingdom of Christ and was a warm supporter of every good cause. From the day of the arrival of the little party of Jesuits he was a loyal friend on whose practical counsel and help they could at all times count.

It was not long before Xavier discovered how little had been done, physically and spiritually, for the people among whom he had come to dwell. The many levels of the population from *fidalgos* to slaves have already been noted; to this diversity must be added the great variety of races represented.<sup>20</sup> Such help as was available could not reach them all. In that unfavourable climate the hospital was always full, thirty to forty Portuguese patients in ordinary times, and far more during the period in which the ships were in. A house had been prepared for Xavier in his capacity as apostolic delegate; but he refused to live in it, preferring to sleep in the hospital, usually on the ground and near to the man who was most gravely ill, in order that he might be in immediate readiness for any urgent call. He extended his charity to the prisoners, condemned to live for long periods in degrading conditions in the jail by reason of the inordinate delay in hearing their cases. Even the lepers in the *hospitium leprosorium S. Lazaro* were not beyond the reach of his care: 'On Sundays I have been going outside the city to say mass for the lepers in the leper hospital. I heard their confessions and gave communion to all who resided in that dwelling. On one occasion I preached to them; they have showed themselves very friendly and devoted to me.'<sup>21</sup>

What most disturbed him was the profound ignorance in which the Indian wives of Portuguese and their half-caste children had been left. Xavier resolved to set this right, and devised a method not very different from that adopted by General William Booth more than three centuries later. We owe to the pen of the sober and usually accurate Teixeira a full account of these unusual proceedings.<sup>22</sup> The saint would walk through the streets and squares of the city, ringing a little bell, and crying aloud, 'Believing Christians, friends of Jesus Christ, for the love of God send your

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sons and daughters, your male and female slaves, to the Christian instruction.'<sup>23</sup> These strange methods, more reminiscent of the gay spirit of the other Francis than of the solemn intensity of Ignatius, were so successful that at times Xavier would find himself in the church of our Lady of the Rosary with three hundred ragamuffins in front of him.<sup>24</sup>

Less conspicuous, but perhaps in the end more effective, were the means he used to make his ministrations available to those who most needed them. If he became aware of one whose life was more than ordinarily irregular, he would arrange to be invited to dine at his house. He would praise the cooking and the excellence of the service, and would ask to be introduced to each of the girls, without a word of criticism or reproof.<sup>25</sup> He would ask the host to discharge one of the girls for whom he had already found a bridegroom. Ten days later he would return to the charge, and withdraw from his host a second concubine, and then a third, and a fourth, until only one was left, whom the reprobate would probably marry, since it was hard to refuse the Father anything.<sup>26</sup>

During these five months of mainly pastoral activity Xavier found yet another field of interest and activity. The college of St Paul had been founded, but great difficulty had been experienced in finding competent teachers. A suggestion seems already to have been made that this was a sphere in which Jesuits could be usefully employed. The leaders in Goa would have been glad to hand over the whole work and administration of the college to Xavier and his friends. So far Xavier was not prepared at that time to go. But he was deeply interested, and had a clear vision of what the college might do. In another letter to the brethren, of the same date, 20 September 1542, he writes:

We trust in God our Lord that before many years have passed men will go out of this college able greatly to increase in these parts the faith of Jesus Christ and to extend the limits of our holy mother the Church. I believe that within six years thirty students of various languages, races and nations will have gone out from here qualified greatly to increase the number of Christians.<sup>27</sup>

It was from their long association with the college of St Paul that the Jesuits derived the name 'Paulists' by which they were generally known throughout the East.<sup>28</sup>

### 3 THE COAST OF COROMANDEL AND THE FISHER FOLK

Goa was the focus and the central point of the entire Portuguese enterprise in the East. Commonsense, if nothing else, had made it clear both to Ignatius and to Xavier that the first step of the Jesuits in the East must be the establishment there of a strong base for all their work in India and beyond.

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But Xavier had not come to India in order to be the parish priest of Goa; it was not long before he felt himself called to very different work, and to that life of astonishing adventures which was to be his destiny for the next ten years.

Strange tales had been reaching Goa, from the extreme south of India, of a community which had committed itself to the protection of the king of Portugal, and as a condition for the securing of such protection had agreed to the baptism of every member of the community – the first mass movement in India into the Christian church. The whole caste of the Paravas, or as they prefer to be called the Bharathas,<sup>29</sup> the hardy fisher folk of the coast of Coromandel, had been baptised some six or eight years earlier, but since that date nothing had been done for them. It was to this area that the governor now decided to send Xavier, promising that when Paul of Camerino and Francis Mansilhas, who were still in Moçambique, arrived, they would be sent on to join him:

The Lord Governor has now appointed me to an area in which according to all accounts there will be the possibility of making many Christians. I take with me three natives of this country; two have already been ordained deacons; they know Portuguese very well, and naturally their own language even better; the third has received only minor orders . . . The name of the country to which I am going is Cape Comorin.<sup>30</sup>

The Paravas lived in a number of villages, perhaps about twenty in all, strung out over a narrow strip of land about a hundred miles in length, from Cape Comorin to Vembār. A hardy race, they live by the sea in two senses of that expression. For most of the year their livelihood is fishing; because of the association of this trade with the taking of life, they are not reckoned by the Hindus as belonging to one of the higher castes. They have developed astonishing skill in the management of their catamarans,<sup>31</sup> each with its single lateen sail. This stern and exacting labour gives them immense physical hardihood, and a strength of character which at its best is courage but may take the form of a rather rough aggressiveness. For the most part the boats remain not far from the shore, and return with the off-sea breeze in the evening. But violent tempests can arise and sweep the boats far out of sight of land; every year a number of lives are lost.

What gave variety to Parava life, and importance beyond the local scene, was the annual pearl-fishery.<sup>32</sup> The collection of oysters begins in March and lasts for twenty to thirty days. The oyster beds lie at a distance of five to six miles from the coast. Fantastic tales are told of the length of time that a diver can remain under water; observation shows that the time is usually not more than a minute, and in no case exceeds a minute and a half. The work is extremely exhausting; by midday the diver has done his work for the day,

and is ready to return to shore for the sorting of the catch. In a good season the profits can be very high; but the man who does the hard work is far from being the only beneficiary.

In the second quarter of the sixteenth century the Paravas had to contend with the demands of a variety of potentates. Both the Cera and the Pāṇḍiyan kings were not far away. The king of Vijayanagar still claimed a rather shadowy sovereignty as far as Cape Comorin, though effective power was exercised by Viśvanātha Nāyakar, who from the city of Mathurai claimed dominion over the northern villages of the Paravas. A new factor appeared on an already complicated scene with the arrival in South India of a race of Moors (Arabs) who took as their headquarters the ancient port of Korkai. These men had considerable experience of pearl-fishing, and seemed to be in process of monopolising the South Indian trade. For a time the Paravas endured their extortions; but, when these became intolerable, they rose in revolt, and it seems that a certain number of Muslim lives were lost. Word went round that in retaliation the Arabs had decided on the total extermination of the Parava race. Where should they turn for protection?

At this point there steps on to the stage one of those curious figures, unimportant in themselves, by whom at a given point the course of history can be changed. John da Cruz was a Chetṭi of the merchant caste resident in Calicut, who in 1513 had been sent to Portugal as an emissary of the zamorin, and while there had been baptised and had taken a Portuguese name. He it was who at this time (probably in 1534) put into the minds of the Paravas the idea of seeking the protection of the king of Portugal, and of accepting baptism as a means of winning the king's favour. The Portuguese were not unknown on the Coast. Their first captain of the Fisher Coast had been appointed in 1524; ten years later they were firmly established in Tuticorin. All dwellers on the Coast were aware that a new power had emerged in their midst.

So in 1535, when the Portuguese ships returned to Cochin, John da Cruz was accompanied by fifteen Paravas. The report they brought back with them was not at first believed, so a larger delegation of seventy was sent. This time conviction was complete; all the members of the delegation were baptised and took Portuguese names. In the following year the Portuguese sailors who came to the Coromandel Coast were accompanied by Peter Gonçaves the vicar of Cochin and three other priests. They found the men of the caste assembled for the pearl-fishery, and then and there baptised them *en masse*. At a later date the women and children who had been left behind in the villages were added to the flock. By the end of the year 1537 the entire community had been baptised.<sup>33</sup>

The Muslims, naturally, were not prepared to let the Paravas slip completely out of their control, and planned a major attack upon them. In

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this they were supported by the zamorin, still at odds with the Portuguese, who sent three ships to their aid. At the crucial moment the governor de Sousa appeared on the scene, and, though his forces were inferior to those of the enemy, decided at once to engage them. On 27 June 1538 a great battle was fought at Vedālai. The fight was long and fierce, but ended with the total rout of the Hindu and Muslim forces. The victory made it certain that the Muslims could not aspire to control the trade in pearls; the zamorin never recovered the power that he had exercised before this defeat. From then on the Paravas were left in comparative peace, with nothing worse to bear than the depredations of those who were now pledged to protect them, and the occasional raids of northern marauders. But nothing was done to help them spiritually; they were Christians in name and no more.<sup>34</sup>

It was during this time of somewhat uneasy peace that the decision was taken to send Xavier to the Coast, to inquire into the needs of the people and to bring some kind of order into their lives. He knew that he was facing a difficult task. The political and social difficulties were compounded by his almost total lack of preparation for the work. He was to live among Muslims and Hindus. There is no evidence that at this time Xavier had any acquaintance with the Koran, or had any means of acquainting himself with Islam from within. Of the Hindu faith he had no knowledge at all, except in so far as he had seen some of the less attractive manifestations of it in Goa and in the port towns at which his ship had touched during the voyage to the south. But he had already taken up that attitude of relentless hostility to the beliefs of the people around him, which is summed up in a brief phrase in one of his early letters: 'The invocations of the pagans are hateful to God, since all their gods are devils.'<sup>35</sup>

Xavier does not give the name of the place at which he first landed among the Paravas, but almost certainly it was Manappādu, a village with which his name was later to be closely associated. Today Manappādu can boast of two noble churches, one of the Goanese, the other of the Jesuit, allegiance. Some of the inhabitants have prospered in trade and have built themselves substantial houses. But we may suppose Manappādu in the sixteenth century to have consisted entirely of single-storey houses built of sun-dried brick and with thatched roofs of palmyra-leaves, with nothing to break the sky-line except possibly the cupola of some surviving Hindu temple. Behind the sand-dunes which fringe the shore, the land rises to the strange area locally known as the *teri*, hills of rich red earth brought by the monsoon winds from inland and deposited where these winds are slowed down by their meeting with the off-sea breeze of the afternoons.<sup>36</sup> Where water comes to the surface there are scenes of glowing fertility; but for the most part the hills, which at one point rise more than 200 feet (61 m) above the sea, wandered over by wild cattle, stand bare except for thorn-trees, low

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bushes and the invaluable palmyra, which seems able to survive on a minimum supply of water.<sup>37</sup>

There is a tendency in writers who have dealt with this period to romanticise the hardships endured by Xavier and later missionaries on the Fisher Coast.<sup>38</sup> At ten degrees from the equator, the climate is hot. But for the greater part of the year the nights are cool and the sea-breeze gives relief. Xavier had accustomed himself to simple and ascetic ways, and in his extensive letters there are few complaints of the physical hardships involved in the conditions under which he worked.

The people of Manappādu had probably heard that Xavier was on his way, and may not have been altogether surprised when the slim short figure with deep-set eyes and the endlessly attractive smile, clad as was his wont in a rather worn and threadbare black cassock, descended on their shores. They crowded round him in welcome, especially the boys, who as he complains would hardly give him time to read his breviary:

As soon as I had disembarked on the Coast, I proceeded to the various villages where they live, and baptized all the children who had not yet received the sacrament . . . The boys besieged me in such crowds that I had no time to say my office or to eat or to sleep. They clamoured to be taught some prayers, . . . I found them very quick and bright, and, if they had someone to instruct them properly in our holy faith, I am sure they would make fine Christians.<sup>39</sup>

#### 4 THE ORGANISATION OF A CHURCH

Before long, the method of work which he must follow became clear to Xavier. He was the only effective missionary on the Coast. He could not be everywhere all the time. The only possible method of building up anything like congregational life was to secure the translation into Tamil of the essential Christian documents, and by constant repetition to beat them into the heads of those who now called themselves Christians. So he gathered together those whom he judged best able to help him, and gradually and laboriously hammered out a rough version of the Lord's Prayer, the Apostles' Creed, the Ten Commandments and some other prayers. Legend, which for centuries made it difficult to encounter the real Xavier, has credited him with a Pentecostal gift for languages. This he himself expressly disclaims, and not without good reason. He had no time to master the idiosyncracies of Tamil grammar. He had no books to help him, and no competent assistants. From the changes and improvements which he later suggested, it is clear that the original version was marred by a number of grotesque errors; it seems probable that the second was not very much better. Still, the first step had been taken, and it is the first step which counts.

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The second step was that of communication. Education of illiterate people is always a difficult task:

When we had completed the translation in their language and knew it by heart, I went through all the area [the Parava quarter] with a bell in my hand and gathered as many men and boys as I could; and, having gathered them, I taught them twice a day. At the end of a month I had taught them the prayers, and instructed the boys that they must pass on to their fathers and mothers and to all others in their homes and to their neighbours what they had learned in school. On Sundays I gathered all the inhabitants of the quarter, men and women, great and small, to repeat the prayers in their own language. They showed much pleasure and came very gladly.<sup>40</sup>

The method of instruction was catechetical. Each clause of the Creed and of the Lord's Prayer, each of the ten commandments was to be repeated after the teacher by the assembled throng. Interspersed were suitable prayers, such as, 'Jesus Christ, Son of God, give us grace to love thee above all things', or 'Holy Mary, Mother of Jesus Christ, obtain grace for us from your Son that we may keep the (first) commandment.' The general confession of sins would be said. With all these many repetitions, the service of instruction and prayer would last rather more than an hour.

In the first days of the mission Xavier was isolated without any really competent helper. A better method could hardly have been devised than that which he adopted. Some today might criticise the amount of parrot-like repetition on which he insisted; and it may be thought doubtful whether the women, across the fog of mistranslation and mispronunciation, understood very much of what they repeated. Illiterates have difficulty in even hearing unfamiliar religious terms, and a long time passes before familiarity of sound is followed by understanding of meaning. But all the time something was going into their minds.

Two steps had been taken. The next step was to ensure that the rough translations were transposed from the Roman into the Tamil script, which Xavier himself could not read, and extensively copied. Xavier affirms that he has attended to this in all his itinerations. To those who can write he gives the prayers, and gives orders that they should be copied and learned by heart; and then that they should be said every day, giving orders at the same time that all should assemble to repeat them. 'And for this I appoint in every place one who has the responsibility of seeing that this is carried out.'<sup>41</sup> Those charged with these responsibilities were given the title *kanakkap-pillai*, literally 'accountant'. Xavier arranged that these persons should receive a small annual salary, to be paid from the profits of the pearl-fishery. He and his companions kept a strict watch on the way in which the supervisors attended to their duties.

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At almost all times during this ministry we find Xavier surrounded by troops of urchins, attracted by his bright smile and his obvious care for them. These lads had become much disgusted with the idolatry practised by the non-Christians, would often argue with the Hindus on the subject, and would rebuke even their own parents, if they fell back into their old pre-Christian ways, and report them to the Father. Then

I would gather all the boys of the village, and go to the place where they had made and worshipped the idols; and then the dishonour heaped on the devil was greater than the honour paid to him by the parents and relations of the boys at the time when they made and venerated the idols. For the boys would take the idols and break them into tiny pieces, and then they would spit on them and trample them under foot and do other things which perhaps it is better not to record in detail, thus showing their contempt for the one who had had the impertinence to demand the veneration of their fathers.<sup>42</sup>

These images were the property of the new Christians, and they had a right to dispose of them. It does not seem that Xavier ever put into effect such drastic measures as were found suitable in Goa; indeed, since the Fisher Coast was in no sense Portuguese territory, he would have had no kind of justification for doing so. This does not mean that he had any high regard for Hinduism, either as a survival in the ways and thoughts of his Christians, or as seen in the countless shrines and temples of the area. Most of his time was spent among the Paravas. But he could not be unaware of the existence of other castes, and in particular of the Brāhmins, the directors of all the large temples, such as that of Tiruchendur on its sandstone bluff,<sup>43</sup> and guardians of the Hindu traditions. Of these he has little good to say:

These are the most perverse people in the world . . . they never tell the truth, but think of nothing but how to tell subtle lies and to deceive the simple and ignorant people, telling them that the idols demand certain offerings, and these are simply the things the Brāhmins themselves invent, and of which they stand in need in order to maintain their wives and children and houses . . . They threaten the people that, if they do not bring the offerings, the gods will kill them, or cause them to fall sick, or send demons to their houses, and, through fear that the idols will do them harm, the poor simple people do exactly what the Brāhmins tell them . . . If there were no Brāhmins in the area, all the Hindus would accept conversion to our faith.<sup>44</sup>

Xavier gives somewhat lengthy accounts of his discussions with the Brāhmins, all of course with the help of interpreters. He found them to be on the whole unlettered folk; only one among them could put forward any pretensions to knowledge. He had penetrated so far into their secrets as to discover that they have books in a language which seems to bear the same relation to their common speech as Latin does to ours,<sup>45</sup> and also that they



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have an inner doctrine of one true God, very different from the form of teaching which they regard as suited to the simple people. He adds the interesting information that, since he came to the coast, only one member of the Brāhman caste had embraced Christianity, 'a young man of very good qualities, who has accepted as his responsibility that of instructing the boys in the Christian doctrine'.

Almost from the time of Xavier's actual presence on the Coast, the work of legend-building began, and it came to be firmly believed that he possessed miraculous powers, which extended even to the raising of the dead. Xavier never made such extravagant claims for himself. Two incidents of the kind on which the legend-makers built their later glorification of the saint and his works give evidence as to the kind of reality which underlay the legends.

In a certain village in which there were no Christians Xavier was brought to a house in which was lying a woman who had been three days in labour and of whose survival there was little hope. 'I began to call on the great name of Christ, recking nothing of the fact that I was in a strange land.' The principal parts of the Christian faith were explained to the woman. When by grace she was brought to believe, Xavier baptised her; immediately after receiving baptism she brought forth her child. The saint then baptised her husband, her sons and daughters, the child which had just been born and all others in the house. The news of what had happened naturally spread far and wide.

In the village of Kombuturē not far from Punnaikāyal, Xavier was just beginning to say mass, when there was a cry, and the crowd brought to him a boy who had fallen into a well, was now unconscious and believed to be dead. The saint knelt down, prayed briefly over him, read some verses of the Gospel, then took him by the hand and bade him in the name of God to stand up. At once the boy sat up and opened his eyes. All cried aloud, 'a miracle, a miracle'. But Xavier bade them keep silent, telling them that the boy was not dead, and that it was the will of the Lord to bring him back to health.<sup>46</sup>

### 5 GOA AND THE EXTENSION OF THE WORK

Xavier had now spent a year on the Coast. He judged it time to go back to Goa and to find out what had happened to the two companions whom he had left behind in Moçambique. On his arrival he learned to his great annoyance that they had already been a year in Goa; the promise that they would be sent after him to the south had not been kept. Paul of Camerino was so deeply engaged in the work of the college that the bishop was not willing to let him go; but Mansilhas, whom no one very much wanted, could be set free for work among the Paravas.

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Mansilhas is a pathetic figure. There was no harm in him. He seems to have been just what today would be called an inadequate personality. His education was defective; and a deep self-distrust made it difficult for him to accomplish even as much as he really was able to do. The bishop did at last consent to ordain him; in a letter of 18 December 1544 Xavier instructs him to make his way to Goa, as the bishop would not be coming to Cochin that year.<sup>47</sup> One of the recently arrived Jesuits Nicolas Lancilotto wrote to Ignatius in Rome,

May God be merciful to those who conferred orders on him. He cannot read his office, and it is doubtful whether he will ever acquire enough Latin to say mass . . . I asked the bishop straight out how he could bring himself to ordain a man as ignorant as that, and his answer was, 'What am I to do, when there are no better educated candidates?'<sup>48</sup>

After his brief stay in Goa, and a halt in Cochin, by February 1544 Xavier was back on the Coast, to endure a year of grave disturbances, which however did not seriously impede the further organisation of the Parava church. The team had been increased by the appointment of two priests, one of whom, Francis Coelho, was an Indian.<sup>49</sup> There was also a layman of some distinction John Artiaga (D'Arze), whose unstable character caused some difficulties, but who claimed to have been with Xavier until he finally left for Malacca in September 1545.

Mansilhas was located in Manappādu with Artiaga, and to help him a cook (the Jesuits were never inclined to carry asceticism to excess), and the little Matthew, a bright Parava boy who had already helped Xavier in various ways and knew enough Portuguese to serve as a no doubt highly amateurish interpreter. Xavier himself chose Punnaikāyal as a conveniently central location, less infested than Tuticorin with Portuguese. He had a cook named Antonio, and a Parava helper also confusingly called Antonio.

By this time sacristans had been appointed in almost all the Christian villages.<sup>50</sup> The village headmen, the *patangatins*, could on occasion be called in to bring discipline to bear on the disorderly,<sup>51</sup> and in the last resort the Portuguese captain of the Coast was there in the background.

Hardly had Xavier arrived for the second time on the Coast when he found himself involved in confused strife, of the kind of which so much local history in India is made up. In the records there are constant references to rulers named Inquitriberim and Beteperumāl, and to a rough people named *badagas*. These strange names require a good deal of elucidation.

Inquitriberim is Rāma Varma Unnikēla Tiruvadi, the full name of the Cera ruler, also known as the great king, who ruled from Quilon as far as Punnaikāyal, that is over the greater part of the realm which had once belonged to the Pāṇḍiyan king of the south. Beteperumāl is Vettum

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Perumāl, whose full name is Māvarman Sundara Perumāl, the Pāṇḍiyan king who ruled the inland area from Kāyattār.<sup>52</sup> The *badagas* are the *vaḍukkārar*, the northerners, the troops of the king of Vijayanagar, who still claimed dominion as far as Cape Comorin.<sup>53</sup> These raiders could penetrate far into the southern regions, carrying with them wherever they went chaos, confusion and distress. The Paravas thus found themselves subject to three lords, the 'great king' in the south, the lord of Kāyattār in the centre, and the *nāyak* under the king of Vijayanagar in the north. These rulers were constantly at feud among themselves, and were united only in their detestation of the Portuguese and their willingness to oppress the Paravas as vassals of the Portuguese.

In 1544 the *badagas* stormed through the country as far as Cape Comorin, made captives of some of the Christians, and oppressed others so severely that they took refuge on the rocky islet not far from the Cape. Xavier did his utmost to go to their help. But the south-west wind was blowing and his efforts were of no avail:

God our Lord knows what labours I endured in that journey. I went with twenty *dōnis* [small boats] to help the Christians who had fled from the *vaḍukkārar* to take refuge on the stony islets off Cape Comorin and were dying of hunger and thirst. The winds were so contrary, that neither with oars nor tow-ropes could we reach the Cape. When the wind drops, I will return again and do everything that I can to help them. It is the most pitiable thing in the world to see these unlucky Christians enduring such afflictions. Every day a number of them come to Manappādu, robbed of everything and poor, having neither food nor clothing.<sup>54</sup>

Relations between the powers were constantly changing, and the enemy of yesterday was likely to be the friend of today. The Christians obtained relief through the kind offices of a nephew of Tiruvadi, who happened to be in the village of Periyatālai not far from the Cape. This good man, having heard of the oppression of the Christians by the principal men (*adhikkārar*), at once sent word to them to permit food and other necessaries to be sent to the Christians, and to treat them with all proper consideration.<sup>55</sup> A little later Tiruvadi himself let it be known that he would be pleased to receive a visit from Xavier as the head of the Christians. This meant an arduous journey across country to some place in Travancore at which the king was at that time residing. Nothing is known of what passed between them; but the result was that Tiruvadi gave the Father 2,000 *fanams* for the building of churches in his area, and also obtained for him from the king of Travancore free access to the Mukkuvas, the fisher folk to the west of Cape Comorin, with full permission for any of his subjects who so desired to become Christians.<sup>56</sup>

The Mukuvvas (in writing of whom Xavier regularly uses the incorrect

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form *Macuas*) seem not to be directly connected with the Paravas, but carry on the same trade and occupy the same position in the social hierarchy.

In a letter of 27 January 1545 Xavier gives a somewhat full account of the manner in which he had baptised in one month more than 10,000 people. He first taught the people the prayers, having with him copies of the Tamil translation.

After the sermon, I asked all, both older and younger, whether they sincerely believed each article of the faith, to which they replied that they did believe . . . So I then baptized them, giving to each one a written note of his name. After the men, it was the turn of the women and girls. When the baptisms were over, the Christians took much pleasure in tearing down the idol-temples, and breaking the idols into small pieces (*en minutissimas partes*).

Written copies of the prayers were left in each place, with orders that instruction was to be given to the new Christians twice daily.<sup>57</sup>

Endless discussions have been held as to the rightness of the methods employed by Xavier, and his giving baptism after so short a period of instruction. For example, Professor C.R. Boxer, quoting Valignano, refers to 'his judicious mixture of threats and blandishments'.<sup>58</sup> Fr Schurhammer rejects this opinion categorically: 'Never and nowhere did Xavier apply threats or other violent methods in his work of conversion, and certainly not in the conversion of the fisher folk of Travancore';<sup>59</sup> it was on the appeal and initiative of the people themselves that Xavier had gone to baptise them.

The eyes of Xavier were now turning eagerly towards the regions farther east. He had resolved to pay a visit to Malacca, in his day already a Portuguese fortress and settlement, and if possible to regions yet farther east. Before setting out he wrote to Mansilhas one of his long letters of advice and encouragement. He must make it his first duty to pay close attention to the new Christians, not settling down in one place, 'but move from place to place, visiting all these Christians as I did when I was there, since in that manner you will best serve God'.<sup>60</sup> A sinister note creeps into these instructions: 'and pay great attention to the priests from Malabar, that they do not go astray . . . and if you see that they have done wrong, rebuke them and punish them, for it is a great sin not to punish those who deserve it, especially when their conduct has caused scandal to many'.<sup>61</sup>

The months from April to August 1545 were spent by Xavier at St Thomas Mount, mostly in quiet inner recollection, and in that intensive pastoral work among the Portuguese in which he was such an expert.<sup>62</sup> Finally he was able in September to set out from Pulicat for Malacca. He did not reappear in India till 13 January 1548, when he landed in Cochin after a safe return journey from Malacca.

The scene now turns back to Goa and to what had been happening to the community of Jesuits there during Xavier's long absence on the Coast and his still more protracted absence in south-east Asia.

The records refer often to Jesuits; but in point of fact during the greater part of the period under review there was only one Jesuit in Goa, Paul of Camerino, deeply engaged in the work of the college. This institution had now been in existence for several years, with a number of youths between the ages of thirteen and twenty-one in training. In the foundation document it had been laid down that the boys were to wear a shirt, trousers and jacket with a tunic, but that after they received orders (presumably minor orders) they should wear cassock and biretta. There was little that was Indian in the rules, except that it is laid down that they are to be provided with rice and curry. Xavier wrote with approval of the work that Fr Paul was carrying on: 'Master Paul is in Goa in the college of the Holy Faith. He is the confessor of the students, and is continually occupied with their sicknesses – of the body as well as of the spirit.'<sup>63</sup>

It was impossible for Paul in addition to his duties as teacher and priest to carry on the administrative and financial work of the college. All this remained in the hands of a small commission of four stewards, the greater part of the work being carried out by Cosme Anes. This was an arrangement to which Master Paul did not find it easy to conform. Indeed he had come to the conclusion that the only solution was that the Society of Jesus should take over the entire direction of the college.<sup>64</sup>

In the years 1542 and 1543 no recruits arrived from Europe. At last in 1544 the much needed reinforcements appeared on the scene.

Antony Criminali was an Italian, young and eager, who had been ordained priest in Coimbra in that very year.

John de Beira, a Spaniard and an older man, had been a canon of the cathedral of Corunna. Later he was to spend nine years in the Moluccas, passing through incredible adventures, and enduring sufferings which in the end unhinged his mind.<sup>65</sup>

Nicolas Lancilotto, often sick and inclined to melancholy, was the best scholar of the three. He settled down to be the teacher of Latin in the college, and records for us his syllabus. For grammar he had the *De duplici rerum et verborum copia* of Erasmus. He also read with the boys all the eclogues of Virgil, some fables and epistles of Ovid, and two plays of Terence; for variety an epistle of Jerome in Lent. He found the boys intelligent and had good hopes for the future.<sup>66</sup>

For some years the main concern of the society was the college. Little if any attention was paid to the background of the pupils or to their native

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tongues, though the hope was expressed that they would not forget the languages they had spoken at home. The variety of backgrounds and languages was a perennial problem. As they were in Goa, it was natural that they should learn Portuguese, but there were many parts of the East where this would be of no use to them. Latin commended itself as the *lingua franca* that would carry them wherever the Christian church existed.

In 1548 two parties arrived and more than doubled the number of Jesuits in India.<sup>67</sup> In a not very distinguished company three names stand out as deserving special mention:

Antony Gomes (*b.* 1520 in the island of Madeira; joined the Jesuits in 1544) had been a brilliant student in the college at Coimbra, and was reckoned an outstanding preacher. Though not yet thirty years old, he had been chosen by Simon Rodriguez in Lisbon to be the first rector of the college in Goa, now that it had been decided that the society would be responsible for all its affairs.

Gaspar Berze, a Fleming, without brilliance but with gifts of steadiness and stability which were lacking in many of his brethren, was to succeed to the authority of Xavier in India.

The youngest of the party was the aristocrat Luis Fróis, still only a boy when he reached India,<sup>68</sup> by far the best stylist and letter-writer among the Jesuits; the gifts which were to find their fullest expression in the *History of the Mission to Japan* (1586) were ripening during the years that he spent in India. To his gifts of observation we owe many vivid glimpses into life as it was lived in India in the sixteenth century.

When Xavier returned from his long absence, to be warmly welcomed by old friends as by the new arrivals, he had much to learn. While he was away the Christian forces had been strengthened by the arrival of the Dominicans in some force. And the Jesuits had settled down to be something more than a collection of individuals.

Two notable baptisms had brought encouragement to the Christian forces in Goa.

The Brāhman known to the Portuguese as Loku was one of the most prominent men in Goa. He had been in the service of the Portuguese for twenty-five years, was a close friend of the governor, and had found many means of enriching himself. But he had steadfastly resisted all efforts to make him a Christian; indeed he is mentioned by name in a letter dated 6 November 1541 as one of those whose opposition had prevented many in Goa from accepting the faith.<sup>69</sup> But now disaster had befallen him, and had led him to see things in a different light. Extravagance had led him into indebtedness beyond his power to meet, and he had found himself in gaol.

### *Successes and Failures*

After a long discussion with Fr Gaspar Rodriguez, in which other Hindus also took part, he declared himself convinced of the truth of the Christian religion and asked for baptism, adding that justice must take its course and that he did not ask for release from prison as a result of his becoming a Christian.<sup>70</sup>

The baptism, on 21 October 1548, was made the occasion of a public ceremony of the greatest splendour.<sup>71</sup> The candidates for baptism rode through the streets on horseback, accompanied by musical instruments and followed by an immense crowd, to the chapel of the college of St Paul. The bishop baptised six persons – Loku, his wife, his nephew, two village headmen and an unidentified woman. Loku, for whom the governor stood sponsor, received the name Luke de Sá; his wife became Doña Isabel, his nephew Don Antonio. The festivities lasted eight days. Hindus were reported as saying that, now that their father had become a Christian, there was nothing for them to do but to follow his example.<sup>72</sup> It seems that Loku died not many years after his baptism.

The rājā of Tanor was ruler of one of the petty principalities into which at that time South India was divided. His territories lay just to the south of those of the zamorin of Calicut. Aggressive actions on the part of the zamorin had led to considerable enmity between him and his neighbour; like the rājā of Cochin before him, the rājā of Tanor was naturally inclined to seek the friendship of the Portuguese.

The young rājā had established friendly relations with Antony de Sousa, captain of the fort of Chale, and by his hand had sent a letter to the governor dated 9 December 1545. The writer affirmed that for a long time he had been considering the possibility of baptism, but had deferred it, partly because of the hostility it would arouse among the Nāyars, and partly because of the ambiguity of his position – he was not in the strict sense of the term rājā, but was exercising authority on behalf of his elder brother who was mentally afflicted. It seemed to him better to await the death of his brother and his mother before taking the decisive step. This letter was accompanied by a long missive from Master Diogo (Borba), in which it was frankly acknowledged that the rājā desired to have the help of the Portuguese against his rivals; none the less he was sincere in his affirmation that he desired to accept baptism only for the sake of the salvation of his soul.<sup>73</sup>

The turning point came in 1549. The rājā had often been visited by the excellent Franciscan Vincent de Lagos, who had made his home at Cranganore. His appeals were strengthened by those of Cosme Anes, who had stopped off to see the rājā in the course of a voyage from Cochin to Goa, and had explained to him of how great benefit it would be both to the service

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of Christ, and to that of the king of Portugal, if he became a Christian. His words had their effect. The rājā agreed to be baptised, but only on condition that his baptism be kept secret, and that he be not required to make any changes in his outward appearance.<sup>74</sup> Having learned that the name of the reigning king of Portugal was John, he asked that this name might be given to him in baptism. The sponsors were the captain of the fortress and Cosme Anes; the baptism was performed by John Soares, the vicar of Chale.<sup>75</sup>

The next event in this drama was the solemn entry of the newly converted rājā into Goa on 22 October 1549. This had been preceded, by order of the governor (Cabral), by a solemn conclave to discuss among other things whether the rājā as an undeclared Christian could continue to wear the sacred thread, which was forbidden to high-caste converts in Goa. The bishop was in favour. Joseph of Arimathea, Nicodemus and Gamaliel (!) had been secret Christians, and St Sebastian as a secret Christian had worn the ordinary dress of a Roman soldier. The rājā was waiting for the conversion of many Nāyars and other important people in his kingdom; after they had been baptised, he would give up his thread and wear Christian clothes. This view met with general approval.<sup>76</sup> The missionaries of that period, coming as they did from societies hierarchically arranged in which there was a radical distinction between gentle and simple, on the whole found it easy to believe that caste distinctions were no more than a matter of social order and had no special religious significance.

On arrival the rājā was decked out in a magnificent set of Portuguese garments, the offensive tuft being hidden by a cap with a white feather, and the sacred thread concealed by layer upon layer of silk and damask. On 25 October Don John, as we must now call him, was solemnly confirmed in the chapel of St Jerome in the college; he held long and confidential colloquies with the bishop and the governor, explaining the reasons for his concealment of his Christian faith. On 27 October he set out on the return journey to his kingdom. Shortly after his departure the governor received word that one of the principal officials of the rājā of Chale had been baptised, and also one of the *kaimāls* (principal land-holders).<sup>77</sup>

On such fair promises great hopes were built. All were to end in frustration. Within a few months of this noble reception, the rājā was asking for special privileges in the matter of the pepper trade, proposals received with a very ill grace by the Portuguese. Much worse was to follow. On 30 January 1552 Simon Botelho the treasurer wrote a long letter to the king, in which, reporting that the collection of pepper had gone forward with very great difficulty, he attributed the principal blame for this to the rājā of Tanor, who had spared no effort to stir up the minds of the people against the Portuguese, and had scattered bribes in all directions even as far as Quilon.<sup>78</sup>



## *Last Days of Xavier in India*

### 7 LAST DAYS OF XAVIER IN INDIA

These were the years in which, for the first time since the arrival of the Jesuits in India, their number rapidly increased.

The increase had its drawbacks as well as its advantages. The great majority of the recruits had been sent out from Europe, especially from Portugal, where Simon Rodriguez was serving as provincial on behalf of Ignatius. Some, however, were older men, on whom the services rendered by the Jesuits had left such an impression that, on or after their arrival in India, they desired to associate themselves permanently with the society. Others were adventurous youths, attracted by the glamour of foreign parts and missionary work, with little idea of the sacrifices demanded by the religious life. Antony Gomes, while acting as head of the mission, had been somewhat open-handed in admitting postulants, including one *mestiço*. Some of these Xavier on his return rejected out of hand; others fell by the wayside, not being able to stay the course; only a few remained to become valuable colleagues. And Xavier became more and more doubtful of the possibility of building up the forces of the society by recruitment in India – Portuguese were few; *mestiços* in general lacked stability; what he had seen of the Indian clergy did not encourage him to think that men of the iron resolution he expected of his colleagues would readily be found among them.

Xavier found it necessary to dismiss from the society some who had been admitted and trained. In most cases the cause was not so much misconduct as disobedience. Some recruits had not understood the nature of the unconditional and unquestioning obedience which Xavier regarded as the very life-blood of the society. As the terrors of life among the Muslims in the Moluccas came to be better understood, some of those appointed to that region refused to go, and others withdrew without permission from their posts. This was not to be endured; the insubordinate might find other places in which to serve the cause of Jesus Christ, but not within the sacred precincts of the Society of Jesus.<sup>79</sup>

All, however, was not dark. Increase in numbers made possible a number of new adventures, and far better organisation in places where a start had been made.

On the Fisher Coast something like a parochial system began to take shape. The superior, Antony Criminali, appointed by Lancilotto but approved by Xavier, though not yet thirty years old was warmly accepted by his colleagues as their head. Of him Xavier wrote to Ignatius on 14 January 1549:

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Believe me, he is a really holy man, and excellently suited for the cultivation of these fields . . . The brethren in the Comorin field obey him. He is wonderfully dear to the Indian Christians, and also to Hindus and Muslims alike. I can hardly find words to express how much he is loved by the brethren over whom he presides.<sup>80</sup>

The long narrow coastal area had been divided into five districts, with one or two Jesuits resident in each. The great step forward was that a beginning had been made in the study of the difficult Tamil language. Criminali himself had made a start. Two of the younger men had shewn great promise, and already in 1550 one of them was said to be able to hear confessions. Both of these unfortunately died young.

The real hero of this particular enterprise was Henry Henriques, who in spite of constant ill-health and a tendency towards depression, held on for fifty years, and ended his ministry, still at work, on 6 February 1600. Henriques had had some difficulty in entering the society, partly because he was a 'new Christian', partly because he had been for a time a member of the Franciscan order.<sup>81</sup> He had little natural gift for languages, and at times was in despair of ever being able to master, without the aid of grammar or dictionary, a language which Europeans have always found it extremely difficult to learn. Of his prowess more will be recorded in another connection.

Henriques' whole time was not spent in caring for his Fisher Christians. In a letter of 21 November 1549 he writes of a yogi with whom he had established a firm friendship:

Little by little I have declared to him the truths of our faith, and one day he declared to me his intention of becoming a Christian, since the articles of our faith appeared to be very holy and conformable to all good reason. [He then became so active in reproving the deeds of the heathen that] these unhappy people have been reduced to a state of total confusion, and said 'This yogi is not really a Hindu, he is a Christian.'<sup>82</sup>

On 25 May 1550 the yogi was baptised in Punnaikāyal, taking the name Manuel Coutinho, after the captain of the Coast who stood as his sponsor.<sup>83</sup>

The ministry of Antony Criminali was not to be of long duration. He lost his life in the year 1549 in one of the endless quarrels between the *vadukkārar* and the local inhabitants, including Christians. The Portuguese had erected a stockade in the neighbourhood of Rāmesvaram, one of the holiest places in India and still a great place of pilgrimage for Hindus. The local Brāhmans objected and brought down a large band of *vadukkārar* to drive out the Portuguese. Two assaults were resisted; when the third was delivered, the Portuguese found it necessary to escape by sea, and the Christians also took to their boats. Criminali could easily have saved himself

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by embarking; but, seeing that a number of women and children were still on shore, he stayed to help them, and then found that his retreat had been cut off. He survived two lance-thrusts, and was still moving towards the church where he had said mass that morning, when a third group fell upon him; one, who was identified as a Muslim, struck him on the shoulder with his halberd and, after he had fallen on his knees, cut off his head and carried it away. After the *vadukkārar* had withdrawn, some Christians were able to take up the remains and give them hasty burial in the sands of the sea.<sup>84</sup>

Xavier spent the greater part of the years 1549 to 1552 in Japan. Before setting out on the last voyage, which led to his death on the island of Sancian, he had one further brief period of residence in Goa. Of all the many problems with which he had to deal in these last two periods of service in India, none caused him more distress than the delicate and difficult affair of Antony Gomes.

Gomes had been sent to India by Simon Rodriguez, carrying in his pocket his letter of appointment as rector of the college in Goa. Everyone who knew Gomes, even those who most fully appreciated his gifts, agreed that he had not the qualities which would make a man a good rector. All this is perhaps best expressed in the words of the gentle but sometimes querulous Lancilotto:

It is true that he had more talent for preaching and hearing confessions than for government and administration . . . As soon as Antony Gomes had taken over the college, he began to give it in everything a new form, declaring that as regards the studies of the students he wanted to introduce the Paris methods, and as regards meditation and the life of prayer the methods to which our students in Coimbra become accustomed . . . With God's help he will carry all this through, though with difficulties, since the students in the college are a miscellaneous collection from ten nations, each more barbarous than the next, the most barbarous and uncivilized people in the world.<sup>85</sup>

When Xavier arrived back in Goa, Gomes lost no time in putting his ideas before him. The college of St Paul as it was, with its mixture of ages and pupils on all levels from the most elementary studies to the rudiments of philosophy, was no use. It must be reconstituted as a Jesuit university for philosophy and theology. Lower schools must be founded in Cochin and Chaul from which the best students could come on to the Coimbra of the East in Goa. According to Gomes' own account Xavier agreed with him, and added the further proposal of a college in Quilon for the sons of Portuguese parents.<sup>86</sup>

Rejecting all advice to move prudently and gently, Gomes, taking up the attitude that he alone knew the true spirit of the society and understood its

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rules, began to stir up everything and to direct with a high hand. Lancilotto describes the situation as he had himself experienced it:

He therefore began his rule by laying his hands on our eating and drinking, sleeping, reading, praying, even on our saying mass, quantitatively and qualitatively, as though he had taken for his maxim *Recedant vetera, nova sint omnia* . . . We were not the only ones to suffer; for he constrained and harassed the Indians . . . also with a variety of orders and constitutions, fixing for them hours of prayer, contemplation and examination of conscience. I had been familiar with these students for years, and knew them to be incapable of following such a regime. I accordingly told Fr Gomes that new wine should not be put into old bottles, that we should proceed step by step with the young men, and be satisfied with the fact that they are Christians.<sup>87</sup>

What Gomes was doing was to turn a school, in which only a minority of the pupils would go forward to ordination, into a seminary governed by rules suitable only to candidates for the priesthood. A number of the pupils were not boys but young men of twenty or twenty-one years old. They were not ready to submit to such harsh discipline; it is not surprising that some of them began to leap over the confining walls and to run away.

The vial of the iniquities of Gomes was not yet full. At the beginning of the year 1550, relying on the authority of the governor Cabral but contrary to the documents of foundation, against the advice of Cosme Anes and the other founders, against the will of the bishop and the people, against the wishes of his brethren and of the king and queen, he dismissed all the Indian pupils, including those from the Fisher Coast and from the Moluccas.<sup>88</sup>

By now it was clear that Gomes was no longer tolerable, and that he must be dismissed from the society. The measures taken by Xavier to this end were not a little devious. But at the beginning of 1553 Gomes, then in Diu, was shewn the letter of dismissal signed by Xavier before his departure for the Far East. Gomes had never realised the extent of his transgressions and regarded himself as having been hardly used. He decided to return to Europe and to lay his case before the pope in person. Accordingly on 1 February 1554 he took ship on the *São Bento*, the best and strongest ship in the fleet. But the voyage was not prosperous. On 23 April the good ship was wrecked off the mouth of the Great Fish River, east of the Cape of Good Hope, and among those who lost their lives was Fr Antony Gomes. This was a sad conclusion to the life of a highly gifted man, ruined by his ardent temperament and by his failure to understand the virtues of humility and obedience.<sup>89</sup>

On Maundy Thursday 1552 Xavier left Goa on his last eastern journey, accompanied by a small number of companions – Balthasar Gago, who gave

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many years of service in Japan;<sup>90</sup> Alvaro Ferreira, a Jesuit postulant not yet ordained;<sup>91</sup> an excellent Chinese Christian who had studied for eight years at the college of St Paul; and Christopher, a Christian from Malabar, who was Xavier's personal servant. From this journey he was never to return.

What manner of man was this great apostle of the East?

Everyone who came in contact with Xavier seems to have agreed that he was a saint. Men might disagree with him; but in all the extensive records there is not a single word that runs contrary to the general verdict as to his saintliness. There are many references to the long hours that he spent in prayer and in rapt contemplation of his Lord. He disclaimed anything in the way of miraculous powers; in his devotions there was nothing that could be called mystical in any strict sense of that term. He seems to have followed the broad lines of medieval devotional practice, profoundly influenced by the *Spiritual Exercises* of his master Ignatius.

Xavier, like Ignatius, was in all things a medieval man, untouched by any of the new currents of thought in theology or in the daily affairs of life. It is probable that, in the ten years of his sojourn in the East, he never possessed a Bible or even a New Testament. Apart from his breviary and his missal, his sole companion seems to have been the work of Marcus Marulus, *Opus de religiose vivendi institutione*, a thick book of 680 pages, published at Cologne in 1531.<sup>92</sup> He seems rarely to have based his discourses directly on the Bible; he never arranged for a single chapter of the Bible to be translated into Tamil or Malayalam.

Of his capacity to draw men to himself and to hold their affection there can be no doubt at all. His letters bear witness to his own deeply affectionate nature. The restraints of his strictly ascetic life seem to find compensation in the effusive outpourings of his heart whenever he thinks of his brethren, especially of Ignatius, and of the others whom he does not expect ever again to see in this life.

Under this affection lay a will of steel, and a severity which at times would brook no compromise. Those who break the rules of the society must be ruthlessly expelled, whatever it may cost. But that the emotional cost was high is clear from many expressions in his letters. In one of his very last letters, written to Gaspar Berze on 25 October 1552, he instructs him to expel from the society any disorderly layman or priest, and not to receive such offenders back, even though the viceroy and the whole of India were to plead their cause. At most they might be given a letter to the rector of Coimbra; even if unsuitable in India, they might render good service in Portugal.<sup>93</sup> Yet he could write to express his horror at the claim made by Antony Gomes that he had authority to send back to Portugal in irons disorderly members of the society:

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Up to the present it has never seemed to me suitable to keep in the company anyone by force and against his will, but only by the force of love and charity. I did indeed dismiss from the society those who did not seem suited to it, even though they desired to continue in it . . . It seems to me that the term Society of Jesus should be understood as the society of love and fellowship of spirits, and not of harshness or servile fear.<sup>94</sup>

From the extent and volume of his correspondence it appears that Xavier can rarely have been without a pen in his hand; never even in his remotest wanderings does he seem to have lacked for parchment and ink. These letters reveal his tender care for all his friends. At times, however, they evince almost the temper of a governess. No detail is too small for his attention; he piles injunction upon injunction; it never seems to occur to him that his friends might have some commonsense, and might have grace on occasion to make use of it.

In another respect Xavier was a man of his time. He relied greatly on the power of the civil arm, and on more than one occasion wrote to the king of Portugal urging him to exercise his powers as the vicar of Christ under the *padroado* agreement for the furtherance of the cause of Christ in Asia. The most surprising and disturbing outburst is contained in a letter despatched from Cochin on 20 January 1548. The king is urged to regard the governor as more important, in the work of spreading the gospel in India, than any religious person. Let the king warn the governor that

should he fail to take active steps for the great increase of our faith, you are determined to punish him, and inform him with a solemn oath that, on his return to Portugal, all his property will be forfeited for the benefit of the *Santa Misericordia*, and beyond this tell him that you will keep him in irons for a number of years . . . There is no better way of ensuring that all in India become Christians than that your highness should inflict severe punishment on a governor.<sup>95</sup>

Xavier shared the view of his contemporaries that the Inquisition was a benevolent and useful institution. On this subject also he wrote to the king:

By another route I have written to your highness of the great need there is in India for preachers . . . The second necessity which obtains in India, if those who live there are to be good Christians, is that your highness should institute the holy Inquisition; for there are many who live according to the law of Moses or the law of Muhammad without any fear of God or shame before men.<sup>96</sup>

Xavier was, of course, referring principally to the 'new Christians' of Portugal, whose conversion to the Christian faith had been only nominal and who, when opportunity offered, were ready to revert to the faith of their fathers. He did not intend, as has sometimes been asserted, that the terrors of the Inquisition should be used to compel non-Christians to enter the Christian church.

### *Estimate of a Period*

During the lifetime of Xavier and since his death there have been many who have maintained that he should have spent more of his time in India, and that his endless peregrinations to the far places of the earth were a source of weakness rather than of strength to the Christian cause in its infancy. It may well be granted that the work in India suffered gravely from the lack of continuous and regular direction, and that much confusion and some disasters could have been avoided, if the provincial had been steadily at the head of affairs. But this was not the way in which Xavier understood his commission. Wherever the Portuguese were, there he was to be, and if possible a little ahead of them. For the evangelisation of the nations the chosen instrument in the hand of God was the Society of Jesus. These peoples of the Farther East had been included in the commission given him by the king and the pope. How could he plan wisely for the planting of the holy church among them, unless he had first seen them, and personally made their acquaintance?<sup>97</sup> It was no mean feat to have lived for two and a half years in Japan, the first European ever to have done so. His observations on that country were of undoubted geographical and ethnological value. And the effect of his letters on the Christians of his day was incalculably great; a whole new world arose in the astonished consciousness of Europe and of the Roman Catholic church. What the voyages of Captain Cook did two centuries later for the English-speaking world, the letters of Xavier and his companions did for the Mediterranean world, and beyond it, in the sixteenth century.<sup>98</sup>

### 8 ESTIMATE OF A PERIOD

The state of the Christian church in India at the end of half a century's work was full of promise rather than of fulfilment.

The established church had followed the Portuguese, and existed, often in rudimentary form, in every settlement where Europeans were to be found. The hierarchy existed visibly in the person of one aged and much respected bishop. Many of the vicars were men of moderate talents and in some cases of scandalous life. Some cynics felt that it would be better if they were not there at all. They did, however, represent in some sense a presence of the church and at least a minimal care for the spiritual well-being of foreigners in India.

The Franciscans were well established in Goa, Cochin and Cranganore. Their outreach was limited; but their reputation stood high, and they represented an ideal of sanctity in sharp contrast to the laxity of the secular clergy and to the licentiousness of Portuguese life in general.

The Dominicans, after a rather long interval, had at last responded to a strong recommendation from the king, backed up by a generous royal grant

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for the building of a convent and by the promise of an annual grant from the revenues of Goa, and had decided in 1548 to launch out again on an Indian mission.<sup>99</sup> The newcomers received a warm welcome from the Franciscans, with whom they were temporarily lodged until they were able to find a site for the residence that was to be erected for them. The vicar general of the newly formed province, Fr Diego Bermudez, soon won the respect of all by the integrity of his character and the strictness of the discipline which he imposed upon himself and upon his brethren; but his zeal seems hardly to have been matched by wise prudence; it is wiser for a newcomer not immediately to denounce the evils by which he may find himself surrounded. Like many of his contemporaries, Bermudez may have been inclined to rely too much on royal support as the golden means to success in the work. Like others he had become aware of the grave difficulties in the way of conversion, and so felt himself compelled to write to the king: 'Your highness must understand that we religious can do nothing here without great favour shewn by your highness to our work; if this is lacking, we lose heart and accomplish nothing.'<sup>100</sup>

The official name of the Dominican order, the Order of Preachers, indicates the special area in which it was hoped that the friars would render help to the beleaguered forces in India. Among those already in the country there were some effective, even powerful, preachers. But the constant pleas in the letters of Xavier to the authorities in Europe for the sending out of men capable of preaching is an indication of the lack, which was even greater among the secular clergy than among the regulars.

In the decade 1542 to 1552, the lion's share in the work of the evangelisation of India was taken by the Jesuits. By the year 1549 they were everywhere in the world of Portuguese India and beyond it. In a letter dated 14 January 1549 Xavier reports to Ignatius: 'In every part of India where Christians live there are to be found some Fathers of our society; in the Moluccas there are four, in Malacca two, at Cape Comorin six, in Quilon two, in Bassein two, in Socotra four, in Goa a much larger number, apart from the Indians in the college.'<sup>101</sup>

In 1551 the Jesuits in India were joined by twelve recruits, among whom Melchior Nunes Barreto, Emmanuel de Morais (senior), Antony de Heredia and Emmanuel Teixeira, who wrote a life of Xavier, were men of some distinction.<sup>102</sup> In that year the experiment was made of sending nine orphan boys from Portugal (their age is not specified) to be brought up in India and to aid the missionaries. Some among them later joined the society.<sup>103</sup>

By 1552 a large proportion of the inhabitants of the city of Goa but by no means all, were already Christians, and the bishop had divided the island into parishes. Pupils of the college of St Paul were already beginning to take



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a share in the work of the church. As early as 1545 it was reported that two of the older pupils were preaching in Konkani in the parish churches to the great edification of both Portuguese and Indian Christians. Another had preached in 1546 in the college chapel. In 1547 four had begun to preach in Konkani. One highly gifted Parava boy had preached in fluent Portuguese, and gave promise of one day becoming a great preacher.<sup>104</sup>

The ministration of the sacraments was irregular and conditioned by the fervour, or lack of fervour, of the priests.

Baptism was ministered in the towns with considerable ceremony; but in the villages often with truncated ceremonial.<sup>105</sup>

The bishop ministered confirmation wherever he was; but in view of his age his journeys were limited, and he never visited the area where the largest number of Christians lived, the Fisher Coast.<sup>106</sup> In view of this defect the question was often raised whether dispensation should not be given at least to the vicars to minister confirmation in the absence of the bishop.<sup>107</sup> Once converts had been baptised, they were regarded as ready also to receive holy communion, the practice in India differing widely from that followed in the missions west of the Atlantic. But voices were heard, among them naturally that of Lancilotto, raising the question whether these simple people had a sufficient understanding of the nature of the sacrament to qualify them as worthy communicants: 'Since these people are very new in the faith and do not understand the sacrament, it might be no bad thing to prohibit for a time the giving of holy communion to any Indian Christians.'<sup>108</sup>

Marriage was a source of endless problems. It was the generally accepted view that those who had married as Hindus should continue to live with the partners they had chosen, and that the union should be blessed by the priest unless it was found to be contrary to the law of God. But differences between western customs and those of India, both on the east coast and the west, were considerable; and when account is taken of the rigid rules concerning kindred and affinity maintained by the medieval church, it is not surprising that a great many marriages contracted before baptism were within the prohibited degrees; the question constantly arose whether the powers of dispensation granted by Rome to those in India were adequate to cover all the cases which came before them.<sup>109</sup>

Of sacramental confession nothing is heard in the earlier years of the mission. Xavier, tireless in hearing the confessions of Portuguese, seems never to have ventured on hearing the confessions of Indian Christians, probably being hesitant to hear confessions in a language which he did not understand. The first reference seems to be for the year 1549, by which time Henry Henriques and Paulo do Vale had made sufficient progress in Tamil to understand what they heard. The lack continued in other areas where the missionaries had not learned the local languages.<sup>110</sup>

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Ordination long continued to be a problem. Bishop Duarte Nunes had ordained four Franciscans,<sup>111</sup> and Bishop Albuquerque seems to have been generous in ordaining both Franciscans and Jesuits without insisting on all the canonical requirements in vogue in Portugal at the time. But the ordination of the first Indian student from the college in Goa still lay in the future. We do hear of a number of Indian priests, who at times gave less than satisfaction to the Portuguese with whom they worked. But detailed information is lacking. Some at least of these priests were Thomas Christians who had come over to the Portuguese and had been ordained according to the Latin rite, thus making themselves unacceptable to their own people.<sup>112</sup>

In the absence of priests the work of the catechists was of capital importance, especially on the Fisher Coast. These men were carefully chosen and entrusted with the duties not only of catechising, but also of baptising in cases of necessity, which with the high rate of mortality prevailing were many, and in general of maintaining discipline in the congregations. But their knowledge was limited, and they could do little more than hammer in by rote the essentials of the faith and of worship in the form laid down by Xavier and improved by Henry Henriques. In 1550 Henriques started a little class at Punnaikāyal for the training of young catechists, but after only two years financial stringency brought to an end an enterprise of real promise.<sup>113</sup>

The greatest hindrance of all was the lack of books. Xavier in his spare time had made a beginning with the preparation of a *Doutrina*, often called his *Smaller Catechism*, and followed it up in 1546 with a *Declaração* of the Creed, which passed under the name of the *Larger Catechism*.<sup>114</sup> These circulated among the brethren in manuscript, and eventually a Tamil translation was made.<sup>115</sup>

When the extent and the population of India are considered, all that had so far been achieved by the Christian church may seem to be little more than trivial. But foundations had been laid. The Portuguese were now dealing with three fairly solid blocks of Christians – in and around Goa, the Thomas Christians in Kerala, and the now Christian Paravas of the Fisher Coast. The total number of Christians may have been in the neighbourhood of 150,000. Those who had come directly under Portuguese influence had been much westernised, largely at their own desire; they prided themselves on being as much like Portuguese as possible, a process helped by the intermarriage which was going on all the time. But the Thomas Christians had made it plain that they were not going to be weaned away from their ancient ways; at some points they had adopted the fashions of Rome, rather grudgingly; but they were and would remain for ever different in a great many

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ways from Christians of the Latin rite. The Paravas, though many of them had adopted Portuguese names, had made hardly any other changes in their manner of living. Fisher folk they were and fisher folk they would remain. No one meeting them could doubt that they were Indians of the Indians, and so they are today. This rootedness of the majority of Christians in the soil was of supreme importance for the future. The Western connection was at times to lead the Christians into difficulties with their fellow-countrymen; but the idea that Christianity, even that part of it which had come in with the Western powers, would disappear if at any time India should re-assert its independence of the Western world, was from the start and has always been an illusion.

## 8 · Akbar and the Jesuits

### I AN INQUIRING SPIRIT

If Akbar had been nothing more than a conqueror and a notable administrator, he would still have held a place among the memorable rulers of mankind. What gives him a claim to special regard is the width and magnanimity of his views, his restless searching for the truth, and his readiness to believe that there might be truth in religions other than that in which he had been brought up.

The Mughuls were foreigners in India, and never pretended to be anything else. They were conquerors and bequeathed to all Muslims in India the proud conviction of belonging to a conquering race. Akbar, however, saw more clearly than his predecessors that the rule of his dynasty was not likely to continue unless it could be made in general acceptable to the majority of those over whom that rule was exercised. Conversion to Islam had gone on fairly rapidly, but it was already clear that the old religions were not likely to disappear, and that it was no more probable that all Indians would become Muslims than that they would all learn to speak Persian. If peaceful conditions were to be maintained, there must be some modification of such distinctions as were based on differences of religion, language and custom.

One of the first steps taken in this direction was the abolition in 1564 of the *jizya*, the hated poll-tax. In all Muslim countries, Muslims were exempt from payment of this tax. This exemption was felt to be a sign that only Muslims were fully citizens; all others were no more than tolerated peoples, tolerated as long as they accepted a position of inferiority, and made no claim to full rights as citizens.<sup>1</sup> As a result of Akbar's action, Hindus and Muslims could for the first time feel themselves to be sharers in a common citizenship. The custom of destroying Hindu temples had fallen into desuetude, but it had come to be generally assumed that no more idol-houses could be built. Akbar removed the prohibition, and in a number of cities Hindu places of worship began again to rise from the ground.<sup>2</sup>

## *An Inquiring Spirit*

No doubt there was an element of political calculation in such actions; but it would be a mistake to assume that this was the sole motive by which Akbar was actuated. Throughout his career he seems to have been under the influence of a deep and restless yearning after a religious faith that would satisfy him on all levels of his being.

One of the recorded sayings of Akbar is that 'on the completion of my twentieth year, I experienced an internal bitterness, and for the lack of spiritual provision for my last journey, my soul was seized with exceeding sorrow'.<sup>3</sup>

More startling, and less susceptible of a purely rational explanation, is the experience recorded as having taken place on 24 April 1578. In the midst of a tremendous hunt, Akbar, under the influence of some sudden repulsion, ordered that the hunt was to cease, the hunters were to be dispersed, and no living creature was to be injured. The experience is recorded in different ways. The unctuous Abu'l Fazl writes that

the lamp of vision became brilliant. A sublime joy took possession of his bodily frame. The attraction of *jazaba*, of cognition of God, cast its ray. The description of it cannot be comprehended by the feeble intellect of commonplace people, nor can every enlightened sage attain to an understanding of it . . . About this time the primacy of the spiritual world took possession of his holy form, and gave a new aspect to his world-adorning beauty.<sup>4</sup>

The highly orthodox Sunnī Badā'ūnī is hardly more illuminating:

Suddenly all at once a strange state and strong frenzy came upon the emperor, and an extraordinary change was manifest in his manner, to such an extent as cannot be accounted for. And everyone attempted to explain it in his own way, but God alone knoweth secrets.<sup>5</sup>

One of the problems that Akbar had to face was the lack of agreement among learned Muslims, even among those who laid claim to the strictest orthodoxy, especially in the realm of judicial decisions. To encourage open debate and discussion he had built in 1575, that is three years before the notable experience described above, a spacious hall which came to be known as the *Ibādat-khāna*. This term has been at times translated as 'hall of worship'; but it might more accurately be rendered 'debating hall'. Here on Thursday evenings were gathered learned men of various schools for the discussion of matters of moment. Those invited, all Muslims, included *Shaikhs*, those who had a reputation for sanctity; *Sayyids*, descendants of the Prophet; *'Ulamā*, the doctors of the law; and nobles of the court interested in speculative questions. Akbar was deeply disturbed by the acrimony with which the debates at times were carried on, and by the failure

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to reach agreement even on important matters. This may have been one of the causes for the dissatisfaction he increasingly felt with the religion in which he had been brought up.

This dissatisfaction found expression in one of the most remarkable events of the reign, the promulgation of the so-called 'infallibility decree' on 3 September 1579. It is hardly true to say that Akbar was 'preparing to assume spiritual as well as temporal authority over his subjects'.<sup>6</sup> What he was doing was to claim for himself the position of *Imām-i-Ādil*, 'equitable leader', the supreme legal authority in the realm and the arbiter in all disputes. The essential section of the decree is as follows:

Should therefore in future a religious question come up, regarding which the opinions of the *mujtahids* are at variance, and his majesty in his penetrating understanding and clear wisdom be inclined to adopt, for the benefit of the nation, and as a political expedient, any of the conflicting opinions which exist on the point, and issue a decree to that effect, we do hereby agree that such a decree shall be binding on us and on the whole nation.

Further we declare that should his majesty think fit to issue a new order, we and the nation shall likewise be bound by it, provided always that such order be not only in accordance with some verse of the Koran, but also of real benefit to the nation; and further that any opposition on the part of his subjects to such order passed by his majesty shall involve damnation in the world to come, and loss of property and religious privileges in this.<sup>7</sup>

What Akbar is claiming is quite clear. Debate may go on for a time, but sooner or later decision must be reached, and that decision must be beyond the possibility of appeal. It is now to be the prerogative of the emperor to make such decisions. But Akbar was not claiming to set himself above the law. The Koran still stands as the supreme authority, and the wise sovereign will always consider the real well-being of his subjects. What Akbar was claiming was not unlike the claim made, fifty years before his time by King Henry VIII of England, to be *fons utriusque juris*, the supreme arbiter in matters of law for his subjects in both the civil and the spiritual sphere. But neither Henry nor Akbar claimed to be infallible or above the law of God; each, in the words of the decree, is 'the shadow of God in the world'.<sup>8</sup>

Soon after this, the discussions in the hall of debate were resumed, but with this difference – that representatives of various religions were made welcome and that the discussions were extended to include the views and tenets of religions other than Islam. Such concerns were no new thing in the mind of Akbar; his inquiring spirit had long sought information about these other religions and often through personal contact with their adherents.

Naturally he was familiar with the tenets of the Shī'ahs, though his

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questionings about Islam went much deeper than the somewhat limited differences between Sunnī orthodox and Shī'ah heretic. He may have been attracted by the doctrines of the Sufis. Badā'ūnī, with his usual thin-lipped disapproval, records that on 31 March 1576 Sharīf of Amul arrived at the court and that the emperor had a long talk with him on Sufi nonsense.<sup>9</sup>

Akbar had made acquaintance with Zoroastrians in 1573, and five years later seems to have invited one of the leaders, Dastūr Meherji Rāṇā, to join him at the court. From this time on he gave orders that the sacred fire should be kept burning by day and night 'according to the custom of the ancient Persian kings . . . for fire was one of the manifestations of God and a ray of rays. On the New Year's Day of the 25th year of his reign, he openly worshipped the Fire and the Sun by ritual prostrations.'<sup>10</sup>

With the Jains his contacts went back to at latest 1568. As dislike of killing animals grew, he would naturally find himself drawn by the Jain doctrine of *ahimsā*. We have records of invitations issued by Akbar to more than one Jain saint or sage to come and visit him.<sup>11</sup>

With Buddhists it is unlikely that Akbar had any contact since Buddhism had long since died out in India. But his Hindu wives, whom he permitted to carry out Hindu ceremonies within the precincts of the palace itself, made him directly aware of Hindu practice. It is said that his great friend Rājā Bīrbal (Bīr Bar), a Brāhman, and other Brāhmins, initiated him into the secrets and legends of Hinduism, 'into the manner of worshipping idols – the sun, the stars, and of revering the chief gods of these unbelievers, as Brahmo, Mahadev, Vishnu, Krishna, Ram and the rest'.

Naturally opinions differed as to the value of all these contacts; Badā'ūnī writes: 'His majesty till now had shewn every sincerity and was searching for the truth . . . but when the strong embankment of our clear law had once been broken through, his majesty grew colder and colder, until within the short space of five or six years not a trace of Islamic feeling was left in his heart.' But another less prejudiced writer, Nūru'l Hakk, is of the opinion that 'he endeavoured to extract what was good from the contrary opinions which were expressed, giving the most deliberate attention to all that he heard, for his mind was solely bent on ascertaining the truth'.<sup>12</sup>

## 2 ENTER THE CHRISTIANS

It was into this maelstrom of thinking and talking about religion, under the aegis of a large-hearted but not always perfectly serious emperor, that the Jesuits plunged, when they entered upon the strange adventure of the Jesuits at the Court of the Great Mogul.

For information as to the immediate cause of Akbar's putting himself in touch with the Christians at Goa, we are in the main dependent on the

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letters of the somewhat garrulous secular priest Aegidius Eanes Pereira, a virtuous but not highly educated man, who in 1578 had been sent by Henry de Távora, then bishop of Cochin,<sup>13</sup> to minister to the Portuguese in their settlements in Bengal. While he was there, word seems to have reached the emperor that Fathers of the Society of Jesus<sup>14</sup> had refused to absolve merchants who had infringed the rights of the emperor by failure to pay taxes due to the imperial exchequer;

the king was greatly astonished at the purity and truth of the Christian law, which commands and lays it down that justice is to be observed even in relation to foreigners and to those who live outside that law. This inspired in him such a desire and wish to understand that law that he set himself to obtain all the information about it that he could.<sup>15</sup>

So Fr Pereira, instead of being able to return to Goa, found himself whisked away to the court of Akbar at Fathpur Sīkrī. He arrived on 8 March 1579, and was received by the king with all honour. Akbar, it appeared, was ill satisfied with the religion in which he had been brought up and was open to learn new things. One of the new things that he wished to learn was, oddly enough, the Portuguese language in which he told Fr Pereira to instruct him. The first thing that the Father taught him was to say ‘in the name of Jesus Christ’; this pleased the king so much that whenever the Father came to him, he would say ‘in the name of Jesus Christ’, to which the Father would reply, ‘and may he be with you’.<sup>16</sup>

Fr Pereira was not the man to answer all the emperor’s questions, or to stand up to the *mullāhs* by whom he was surrounded. Akbar warmly welcomed the suggestion that he should invite the Jesuit provincial in Goa to send him two Fathers and a good Persian interpreter. A *firmān* to that effect was drawn up without delay:

For the Father Provincial, in the name of God. *Firmān* of Jalal-ud-din Muhammad Akbar Shah, the king appointed by the hand of God: Principal Father of the Order of St Paul: understand that I am very friendly disposed towards you. I am sending you Abdallah my ambassador, and Dominic Pires,<sup>17</sup> to ask you to send me two learned priests, who should bring with them the principal books of your religion, the Gospel, in order that I may understand the law and the perfection of it, since I have a great desire to learn it . . . Let the Fathers be assured that they will be received with the greatest possible honours, and that I shall take much pleasure in their visit.<sup>18</sup>

The ambassador arrived and was received with as much ceremony as a viceroy at his entry into Goa. He was put up in the college of St Paul with great contentment on both sides, and showed that he had *firmāns* to all the captains of the regions through which the Fathers would pass, instructing



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them to supply the travellers with all that they might need, and to offer them protection if this should be necessary.<sup>19</sup>

On receiving the good news, the provincial was inclined to send at once three Fathers instead of the two asked for, on the sensible ground that, if one of them were to die on the way, it would not be good for one to be left alone in the midst of so many non-Christians. But one difficulty had to be cleared out of the way. The Portuguese viceroy seems to have feared that Fathers sent to the court might be held as hostages by the emperor,<sup>20</sup> and desired that the matter might be submitted to higher ecclesiastical authority. Accordingly the archbishop of Goa<sup>21</sup> called together the bishops of Cochin, Malacca and China (Macao), and the licentiate Andrew Fernandez. In a tremendous sentence twenty-eight lines long the most reverend ecclesiastics express their considered opinion that, although the Fathers might run the risk of martyrdom which could be only to the glory of God, and considering the importance of the business, His Excellency might send the Fathers on their way, trusting only in the protection of God, and hoping that Akbar would turn out to be a second Constantine, for the total destruction of the sect of Muhammad, as had occurred in Europe for the destruction of idolatry and for the augmentation of the Christian faith.<sup>22</sup>

This difficulty having been overcome, the provincial was able to proceed to the selection of the men who were to go on the mission. The three chosen were Rudolf Aquaviva, Antony Monserrate and Francis Henriquez. Aquaviva, an aristocrat and son of the Duke of Atri, was born in the region of Naples in 1550. He had been ordained in Portugal in 1578, and arrived in India in the same year. In spite of his comparative youth and lack of experience he seemed fitted by his learning and prudence to be head of the party. Antony Monserrate had spent some time on the Fisher Coast,<sup>23</sup> and a little later in Cochin, where he was occupied in learning Malayalam. He proved to be one of the most valuable of the early Jesuit historians – it is to his *Relaçam* and *Commentarius* that we are indebted for much of our knowledge of the first mission to the Mughul court.<sup>24</sup> The third of the party, Henriquez, born in Ormuz in 1538, was a convert from Islam who had joined the Society in Bassein in 1556. He was sent as Persian interpreter; but, if Fr Wicki is right in his note *linguam nativam fere oblitus erat* ('he had almost forgotten his native language'), he is not likely to have been of very much service in that capacity.<sup>25</sup> We owe to Matthew Ricci the interesting information that one of the treasures which the Fathers carried with them was a copy of Plantin's Polyglot, the *Royal Amsterdam Polyglot* of the Bible, which had passed through the press between 1569 and 1573, and appeared in six volumes, to which two supplementary volumes were later added.<sup>26</sup> It

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was reported that, when this notable gift was presented to Akbar, he expressed great appreciation, asked in which volume the *injil* (Gospel) was contained, and having been informed displayed particular reverence towards this volume.<sup>27</sup>

The mission of the Jesuits to Akbar was from the start condemned to frustration and to final ineffectiveness. The points of view of the various participants were so divergent as to make almost impossible any real meeting of minds. The motives in the mind of Akbar were known only to Akbar himself. It was his habit to play his cards very close to his chest: 'he was so close and self-contained with twists and words and deeds so divergent one from the other, and at most times so contradictory, that even by much seeking one could not find a clue to his thoughts'.<sup>28</sup>

Without doubt one motive was simple curiosity; Akbar loved to study the minds of men and their ways of thinking and living.

It would, however, be a mistake to underestimate the religious factor in Akbar's approach to the questions raised by the Gospel. Naturally, political considerations were in the forefront of his mind. It would be useful to have at his court Portuguese who could give him information about Europe and the lands from which these potentially troublesome intruders came; and, if necessary, could serve as intermediaries with their authorities on the Indian shore. Yet at the same time he was a genuine seeker after truth, dissatisfied with the Muslim faith and contemptuous of those who professed to teach it. He may well have thought that in some other religious system he might find a refuge from uncertainty, and a place of rest for his restless and unquiet spirit.

We may be in doubt as to the views and purposes of Akbar. No such doubt clouds our understanding of the mind and hopes of the Jesuit Fathers. In Europe their colleagues had set their hopes on the conversion of princes and aristocrats. It was natural that such ideas and hopes should transfer themselves to India. There had been faint indications that these hopes were a little more solid than dreams in such events as the baptism of the *rājā* of Tanor.<sup>29</sup> And the extreme courtesy of the invitation issued by Akbar and the promise of his protection were enough to kindle hopes and expectations, which, as time was to show, were never to be fulfilled.

The three Fathers set out in the company of the ambassador of the emperor, and of the mixed mob which in those days always accompanied an eminent person on his travels. The journey took forty-three days. It is good evidence of the accuracy of Monserrate that, in spite of the difficulty which he experienced in transliterating Indian names, we have no difficulty in following the course of the journey, until it brought the travellers to Fathpur Sikrī, where Akbar was at that time holding his court.<sup>30</sup> Contemporary

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letters from the Indian end depict with slightly naive enthusiasm the eagerness of Akbar for the arrival of the visitors; he would say 'only four days now', 'only three days now', and awaited their arrival with evident impatience.<sup>31</sup>

From the start, the fulfilment of the purposes of the mission was hindered by the difficulty of communication. During the delays of the journey the Fathers had made a start with the study of the Persian language. But it was not long before they became aware of the narrow limits of their progress and of the incompetence of their interpreters. Aquaviva asked the emperor to help them by providing a really good teacher. Once this was done, progress could be made. It is reported that at the end of three months Aquaviva could express himself readily, and that some of the nobles had complimented him on the excellence of his pronunciation.<sup>32</sup> This comment expressed rather the surprise of the nobles that a foreigner could speak their language at all than an objective estimate of his achievement. Fluency and readiness of communication came only with the third Jesuit mission.

The Jesuits, more prudent than many later missionaries, had realised their need for some preparation for their work, and above all for some knowledge of the beliefs of those whom they were about to meet. With this in view, they 'had brought with them a volume of the Mahometan law, rendered into the Lusitanian idiom, in order that they might the more readily reprobate the lies and follies contained in it'.<sup>33</sup> It seems that the Fathers had profited to some extent by their studies. Akbar himself noted the accuracy of their references to the Koran, and that they never made a mistake in their quotations. The participants in discussion with them seem to have been startled by the extent of their knowledge. Three days after the first of their disputations, they initiated a second on the nature of the blessedness promised by Muhammad to his followers. They were able so convincingly to show that it was *lascivum et impudicum* that the *mullāhs* (*moulvies*) were compelled to blush for shame; the emperor, seeing their confusion, came to their rescue, but could not deny the absurdities which the Fathers had adduced from the Koran.<sup>34</sup>

At this time Akbar had three sons and two daughters. One of the most remarkable evidences of the confidence he felt in the Fathers is his willingness to entrust to them his second son, then thirteen years old, for instruction in the Portuguese language and, as the Jesuit records add, in the rudiments of the Christian faith.<sup>35</sup> The boy showed such promise that there seemed to be good hope of his developing into a proficient scholar. Akbar himself on occasion supervised the instruction; one day, when he told the boy to read aloud what he had written at the instruction of the Father, and the pupil read *In nomine Dei*, Akbar told him to add *et Jesu Christi veri Prophetæ et Fili Dei*.<sup>36</sup>

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Throughout the stay of the Jesuits Akbar continued to show them unwonted favours. When the accommodation provided for them proved unsuitable because of the disturbance caused by those who were continually coming and going, he arranged another residence for them hard against the wall of the palace, so that, when a door had been opened in the wall, he could pay them visits whenever he wished without the whole world knowing what he was doing. He seems to have been specially attracted by Aquaviva, whose modesty and extremely ascetic manner of living met with his warm commendation. He was seen to lay his hand on the Jesuit's shoulder<sup>37</sup> and at times even to walk arm in arm with him, a favour never at any time shewn to any other man. At times he would send the Fathers dainties from his own table, this also a favour never granted to others.<sup>38</sup>

All this was welcomed by the Fathers as a sign of the divine favour resting on their mission; but it had very little to do with the real purpose of that mission, the conversion of the emperor. Akbar gave to the Fathers the privilege of speaking to him with a frankness which he would certainly not have tolerated in any of his own entourage. On the subject of *Satī*, the immolation of Hindu widows on their husbands' pyres, they spoke with such openness that 'the whole city was filled with praise and admiration when the news was brought that the Franks had dared to rebuke the king regarding this offence'.<sup>39</sup> On the subject of polygamy, Aquaviva is credited with a less than conciliatory address:

Wherefore let such a man know that he can keep only one wife, the first namely whom he married. The rest are all courtesans and adulteresses, whom by the commandment of God and Christ it is wickedness to retain. Firstly therefore this man must repent of his past sins; secondly he must put away all his paramours; thirdly he must give himself up to fasting and acts of penance, . . . and perform other pious acts.<sup>40</sup>

Aquaviva was declaring no more than the rule of the Western church as it had taken shape through the centuries. He can have had little sympathy for the special problems which confronted Akbar. For diplomatic reasons the emperor had married a number of Hindu wives, as a means of establishing dynastic relations with some of the great princely families which he had subdued. The repudiation of ladies of these houses would have caused repercussions more violent than those arising from the rejection by Henry VIII of England of his first wife Katharine of Aragon.

All such questions were in reality secondary. Everything turned on certain articles of the Christian creed, and especially on the idea of the divine sonship of Jesus Christ, and the consequent doctrine that God is one in three and three in one. The Muslim, like the Jew, committed to the view that the unity of God is like that of the mathematical point which admits of

### *Akbar on the March*

no division, cannot entertain any idea which even seems to conflict with his understanding of essential unity.

So, like all missionaries in Muslim lands, the Fathers found themselves assailed on every hand by a torrent of denial of that which they held most dear. After seven months at the court Aquaviva writes in deep distress to the provincial at Goa:

Scarcely do we hear the most sweet name of Jesus. For the Muslims only call him Jesus the Prophet and say that he is not the Son of God . . . When I say openly and console myself by repeating 'Christ Jesus, Son of God', then all the suffering and sorrow of my mind is renewed, because one of the Mohammedans cries out '*astafarla*' [*Istaqfaru'llah*, God forbid], another closes his ears, a third mocks, while another blasphemes . . . 'How can we sing the Lord's song in a strange land?'<sup>41</sup>

### 3 AKBAR ON THE MARCH

Just one year after the arrival of the Jesuit mission public disputations and private interviews alike were brought to an end by the decision of the king to march against his half-brother Muhammad Hakīm, the ruler of Kābul, who had been incautious enough to invade the Punjab.

On 8 February 1581 the immense cavalcade set out on its long pilgrimage through north-west India. On 1 December of that year Akbar was back again in Fathpur Sīkrī. Monserrate, in his capacity of tutor to Prince Murād, was allowed to accompany the host; and it thus comes about that we have a first-hand account from an intelligent observer of a great Mughul army on the march, through the Punjab and north-west India to the Khaibar Pass and beyond to Kābul. The story gradually unfolds itself, more like that of a pleasant imperial picnic than of a serious military campaign. The emperor allowed himself plenty of time for his favourite pastime of hunting, not without advantage to the commissariat of the army. And he was not too busy to engage in religious discussions. These are meticulously recorded by Fr Monserrate; a brief account of two of them will shed light on the minds and methods of each of the participants.

The emperor puts the question:

Why did not the Lord Jesus, who was so anxious that the Jews should believe in him and be saved, accept the challenge of the Jews when he was on the cross – 'If thou art the Son of God, descend from the cross, and we will believe in thee?'

The priest very sensibly answers:

Man can be justified only by faith . . . If Christ had come down from the cross, this proof would have removed the possibility of faith . . . For if Christ had come down from the cross, they would not have been made better, but would probably have put

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down the miracle to magic, as has frequently happened; for many miracles which can only be performed by the power of God are attributed to the prince of the devils.

The king heartily approved of the reply, though the priest's Persian was both clumsy and scanty, and explained it to his followers, who declared that their doubts had been removed.<sup>42</sup>

On another occasion the emperor asked what Christians mean by affirming that God the Father has no mortal body, yet that Christ sat down by the right hand of the Father – a typical example of the difficulty which Muslims experience in understanding symbolic or analogical language. The priest replied:

We do not mean by this a bodily sitting down, but we say that Christ sits at the right hand of the Father, because, since Christ is God, he has the same glory, honour and power as his Father, to whom he is equal . . . The honour and glory which has been conferred upon Christ is superior to that which others have received; and this is typified by the name of 'right hand', which is superior to the left.<sup>43</sup>

These discussions give evidence of Akbar's continued interest in matters of religion; but, though the Fathers did not yet know it (though there are some indications that they already suspected what was in the wind), his mind was exercised by something that to him was of far greater importance than conversion to Christianity, namely the proclamation of his own version of an universal religion.

The institution by Akbar of the *Dīn-i-Ilāhī*, the divine monotheism (*Tauhīd-i-Ilāhī*), is surrounded by every kind of obscurity, and, as regards the interpretation of it, it is possible to say only *quot homines tot sententiae*.

Tradition has it that Akbar summoned a general council of the high officials of the realm; but this depends solely on the testimony of Fr Daniel Bartoli SJ, writing nearly a century after the events which he records.<sup>44</sup> His account is as follows:

[His plan] was to make himself the founder and head of a new religion, compounded out of various religious elements, taken partly from the Koran of Muhammad, partly from the Scriptures of the Brāhmans, and to a certain extent, as far as suited his purpose, from the Gospel of Christ.

In order to do that he summoned a General Council, and invited to it all the masters of learning and the military commandants of the cities round about . . . When he had them all assembled in front of him, he spoke . . . For an empire ruled by one head it was a bad thing to have the members divided among themselves and at variance one with the other . . . We ought, therefore, to bring them all into one, but in such fashion that they should be both 'one' and 'all', with the great advantage of not losing what is good in any one religion, while gaining whatever is better in another. In that way honour would be rendered to God . . . peace given to the

### *Jesuit Disillusionment*

peoples and security to the empire . . . Thus he spake; and the men of note, especially the commandants who had no God other than the King, and no law other than his will, all with one voice replied, 'Yes; inasmuch as he who was nearer to heaven, both by reason of his office and because of his lofty intellect, should prescribe for the whole empire gods, ceremonies, sacrifices, mysteries, rules, solemnities and whatever else was required to constitute one perfect and universal religion.'<sup>45</sup>

Abu'l Fazl, as was to be expected, gives an extremely favourable account of the religious policy of Akbar: 'He is now the spiritual guide of the nation, and sees in the performance of this duty a means of pleasing God. He has now opened the gate that leads to the right path, and satisfies the thirst of all that wander about panting for truth.'<sup>46</sup> Others were less than enthusiastic. Statements as to the large numbers of those who joined the *Dīn-i-Ilāhī* rest on no authority. By one writer we are reminded that Akbar appointed no missionaries, and by another that 'the organisation of the adherents of the *Dīn-i-Ilāhī* was that of an Order rather than of a church'.<sup>47</sup> Perhaps Dr Krishnamurti is not far from the truth when he writes: 'The *Dīn-i-Ilāhī* was more in the nature of a society of seekers of Truth than of a religion founded on the authority of a Prophet. The seeking had to be done by each member and no revelation was to be expected from any outside authority.'<sup>48</sup> Few synthetic religions have shewn much power of survival. The *Dīn-i-Ilāhī* depended almost wholly on Akbar's personal example and influence. There is no evidence that it ever had any wide following among the common people. Abu'l Fazl, the favourite of Akbar and his eager supporter in all his plans was assassinated in 1602, and thus the *Dīn* lost one of its principal supporters; after the death of Akbar in 1605 nothing more was heard of it.

#### 4 JESUIT DISILLUSIONMENT

Akbar's religious experiments demand mention in this narrative only because of their effects on the hopes and plans of the Jesuit Fathers. Their position was becoming increasingly uncomfortable. It was now clear that Akbar had no intention of ever becoming a Christian. His attitude towards the Portuguese was at best ambiguous, and he had dissembled, if he had not actually lied to them, about his involvement in certain actions taken against them in Damaun. The Jesuit provincial in Goa, who from the letters received from the Fathers had formed a rather unfavourable impression of the prospects of 'the mission to Mogor', wrote recalling them to Goa, where he thought that he could better employ them in other projects.<sup>49</sup>

When the emperor heard of this letter he was much distressed, and refused to give his consent to the withdrawal of the Fathers. In spite of his calculated reserve in matters of religion, he was genuinely fond of them and

### *Akbar and the Jesuits*

did not want to let them go. It was, however, possible for them to renew their request for leave to depart in connection with the desire of Akbar to send an embassy to congratulate Philip II of Spain on his accession to the crown of Portugal.<sup>50</sup> It was decided that one of the Fathers should accompany the embassy. In view of Akbar's special affection for Aquaviva, the lot for departure fell not on him but on Monserrate. After a journey not free from adventures the embassy reached Surat on 5 August 1582; and not long after Monserrate was safe at home with his brethren in Goa.<sup>51</sup> Aquaviva was to remain at the Mughul court in solitude for another year.

The mission seemed to have ended in failure. Yet just at what seemed the lowest point in its fortunes Aquaviva wrote a letter to his uncle, who by that time was head of the Jesuit Order in Rome, setting forth five reasons which led him to think that the mission ought not to be abandoned. After discussing the possibility of a mission to the Bottans (Tibetans), he concludes correctly and wisely:

Where we are is the true India, and this realm is but a ladder which leads to the greater part of Asia . . . ; and now that the society has obtained a footing which is favoured by so great an emperor and his sons, it seems not fitting to leave it before trying all possible means to commence the conversion of the mainland of India, seeing that all that has so far been done has been only on the sea-coast.<sup>52</sup>

The final year that Aquaviva spent at the court of Akbar he seems to have devoted almost entirely to the life of an ascetic and a devotee, concentrating on prayer, meditation, poverty and self-discipline. The pen of a colleague who knew him exceptionally well has preserved for us a picture of him as he appeared and as he was:

Rudolf was gentle and simple, and thought all others to be like himself in these respects. He was devoted to the study of religious treatises and to prayer. Indeed the only thing that would tempt him away from these pious pursuits was the necessary study of Persian or of some similar subject . . . He was most particular in his observance of the rules and discipline of the Society, especially as regards poverty. He was glad to wear old worn-out garments and shoes. His mind was constantly fixed on God, so that he often forgot what he was about. Very frequently he could not remember where he had left his hat, his spectacles, his books and the like . . . He was of marvellous patience and of extreme humility.<sup>53</sup>

All this time Akbar was extremely unwilling to let Aquaviva go. At last, in February 1583 he gave the necessary permission, hoping that it would be for a temporary absence only. He wrote to the provincial at Goa, expressing his deep affection for Aquaviva, and urging the provincial to make sure that he returned.<sup>54</sup>

Aquaviva was urged to accept a parting present; but he would receive nothing other than the liberation of a family of Russian Christians, who had lived so long as slaves in the emperor's entourage that they had become



## *The Second Mission*

almost indistinguishable from Saracens, but who, we are told by du Jarric, from that time on lived in Goa as good Christians. In 1583 Aquaviva arrived back in Goa looking, again according to du Jarric,<sup>55</sup> like a man who had come back not from a court, but from enduring the penances of a novitiate. He did not know that he would never see Akbar again.

So ended the first mission to the Great Mogul, in apparent failure but having permanently enlarged the consciousness of Europe as to the possibilities of Christian missions in India.

### 5 THE SECOND MISSION

During the following seven years there was little intercourse between Akbar and the Portuguese, and it seemed unlikely that the mission to his court would ever be renewed. The unexpected event of the second mission seems to have been mainly due to the presence at the court of Akbar of a young Greek sub-deacon named Leon Grimon, who was on his way back to his own country and was due to pass through Goa. He appears to have been an intelligent young man, and to have pleased Akbar by his conversation and by his knowledge of the world.<sup>56</sup> Akbar decided to make use of the services of this gifted visitor as an emissary to the Portuguese, and despatched him with a safe-conduct and a letter to the Fathers at Goa. The *firmān* contains the remarkable sentence: 'I hope by his means to ensure the despatch of certain other Fathers . . . through whose holy doctrine I hope to be restored from death to life, even as their Master Jesus Christ, who came down from heaven to earth, raised many from the dead and gave them new life.' In the letter to the Fathers, he expresses the hope that 'in disputation with my doctors I may compare their several learning and character and see the superiority of the Fathers over my doctors, whom we call Caziqes [Arab.: *Kashish*], and who by this means may be taught to know the truth'.<sup>57</sup>

Grimon appears to have told the provincial that the emperor seemed strongly disposed to become a Christian; this may have led the provincial to forget the disappointment of seven years earlier, and to conclude that the time was ripe for a new assault on the conscience of Akbar. Fr Edward Leitão and Fr Christopher de Vega were sent off with a lay companion, and reached Lahore in May 1591.

As before, the reception accorded to the visitors lacked nothing in courtesy and generosity. They were given a convenient house in which to lodge, and Akbar asked them to start a school for the instruction of the sons of his nobles, and of a son and grandson (nephew?) of his own, in the Portuguese language. But hardly had the Fathers begun their work when difficulties began to arise and to multiply. In less than a year after their arrival, they had been recalled, and the mission ended almost before it had begun.<sup>58</sup>

6 THE THIRD MISSION

With the third mission, which began with the arrival of a group of new missionaries at Lahore in 1595, we reach a calmer climate and a greater measure of historical certainty. This marked the beginnings of a Jesuit contact with the realm of the Great Mogul which lasted for more than two centuries, and of the work of the great leader of the expedition, Jerome Xavier, who was to spend more than twenty years in the service of the mission. The days of uncertain experiment were at an end, and something like consistency in mission methods was attained.<sup>59</sup>

The proper name of Xavier was Jerome de Ezpeleta y Goni. His father was a nephew of Francis Xavier. Jerome was born in 1549 in the castle of his father in the Spanish province of Navarre. He entered the Society of Jesus on 7 May 1568; it was at that time that he adopted the name of his famous great-uncle. The new Xavier arrived in India in September 1581. Six years were spent quietly in the capacity of rector of the college in Cochin where Xavier had occasion to acquaint himself with the affairs of the Thomas Christians. From Cochin he was called in 1592 to be superior of the professed house at Goa. The years which he spent in Goa were unhappy. The reason usually given is that a Spanish superior could not control Portuguese subjects, and this may well have contributed to the tensions which made life intolerable. It was a fortunate chance that, just when things were at their worst, Akbar made for the third time a request that Fathers should be sent to his capital. Naturally the mood in Goa was one of scepticism; but in the end,

knowing that it was the desire of the Reverend Father-General of the Company that there should always be some Fathers at the court of so great a monarch, both for the benefit of the Christians who were there, as well as for sundry other considerations, he at last after consulting with the most eminent Fathers in Goa, gave his consent.<sup>60</sup>

No greater good fortune could have befallen the adventure than the availability precisely at that moment of Fr Jerome Xavier. The mission was now to be headed by a mature man, forty-five years old, who had already had fourteen years of varied experiences in India, and, as time was to show, possessed gifts of patience, versatility and proportion which were to be tested to the full at the court of the inscrutable Akbar.

Two companions were given to him.

Emmanuel Pinheiro had been born in the Azores in 1556, but did not reach India till 1592. He gave much of his time to pastoral work among the Portuguese and other Christians in Lahore; but at the same time he seems to have been a favourite of Akbar, and to have had influence with him – influence which he sedulously used to the disadvantage of the English.

### *The Third Mission*

Payne (p. 233), reports that 'from the accounts left by Fitch, Mildenhall, Hawkins and Finch, he appears to have been a past master in the arts of intrigue, and thoroughly unscrupulous in the means he adopted to discredit the English in the eyes of the Emperor, and to defeat their attempts to obtain a commercial footing in India'. Of Xavier, Nicholas Withington writes, 9 November 1613, that the Mogul 'would do nothing against the Portuguese soe long as that witch Savier liveth, (for so the Moores themselves term him) which is an ould Jesuitt residing with the kinge, whom hee much affects'.<sup>61</sup>

The third member of the mission, Brother Benedict de Goes, also a native of the Azores, was born in 1562, and joined the Society of Jesus in 1588 after what appears to have been a somewhat disorderly youth. Fate has made of him by far the most famous of the three, not because of anything that he did in the mission of Mogor but by reason of the amazing journey which carried him across Central Asia, and ended with his death at Su-chou in western China in 1607.<sup>62</sup>

In nothing is the excellence of Xavier as a missionary more clearly seen than in the eagerness and patience which he displayed in making himself a master of the Persian tongue. Less than four months after his arrival he wrote to the general in Rome: 'now our entire occupation is to learn the Persian language, and, moreover, we trust in God's mercy that within the space of one year we shall speak it; only then shall we be able to say that we are in Lahore, for up to now we are statues'.<sup>63</sup>

This proved to be an optimistic assessment. At the end of a year Xavier could make himself reasonably well understood; but he had become aware of the great difference between the common speech and that used in the discussion of philosophical and religious problems. In the latter the educated class would make use, for the sake of elegance, of a most copious vocabulary, and with this the missionary must be acquainted if he wishes to talk with them on anything like equal terms. In the year 1600 the Visitor Pimenta reported that the Persians themselves took pleasure in hearing Xavier speak, and admired the propriety of his vocabulary and choice of words.<sup>64</sup>

Xavier himself was less optimistic about his progress. In 1609, in the dedication to Akbar of his book *The Fount of Life*, he expresses regret that 'the style and language will be vulgar, as they are my own, who am so feeble in all things, and especially in this language'.<sup>65</sup>

As with the other missions the beginnings were favourable and encouraging. Akbar continued to show interest in the Christian faith, and was especially pleased by the pictures which the Fathers had brought with them. He gave the Fathers permission to baptise anyone who desired to receive baptism, and also to erect a church.<sup>66</sup> A school was opened and attended by sons of a

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number of the feudatory princes. Before the end of the year two of these had expressed a desire to become Christians. One of them, entering the chapel, threw aside his turban, and kneeling before the altar, said in a loud voice, 'O Saviour Jesus Christ, remember me.' Another, rebuked because he had not fasted on a fast day, asked, 'And who has commanded this fast?' 'Muhammad'. 'And who is Muhammad, if not a false prophet and an impostor?'<sup>67</sup>

Xavier was too old a hand to be taken in by such fair promises. In a letter of 2 August 1598 he writes:

Here all our work consists in clearing the ground of brambles and sowing *supra petrosa Maurorum super spinas Gentilium* (on the rocky ground of the Muslims and the thorny places of the Hindus) . . . As these are beginnings, we have to have patience *ut fructum afferamus* (in order that we may bring forth fruit) . . . but may God help and console us with certain fruit.<sup>68</sup>

On 15 July Xavier was able to have a long conversation with the emperor, and desired to have a plain statement of his attitude; he had failed to listen to them as he had promised to do, and they still had no idea of the way in which his mind was working. Akbar, as usual, refused to be drawn. He was about to leave for the Deccan, and that would bring him into the neighbourhood of Goa where he would be able to listen to the Fathers at leisure. At least he had done this much for the Fathers that, whereas under former rulers they would not have dared to affirm the divinity of Christ, they could now do so with perfect safety.<sup>69</sup>

Xavier and his companions were devoting themselves almost exclusively to the evangelisation of the ruling classes, many of whom would understand Persian, the official language of the court. The majority of the people, however, were Hindus, and spoke an Indo-European language, presumably some form of what is now called Hindi.<sup>70</sup> Fr Corsi soon after his arrival in 1600 gave himself to the study of Hindustani.<sup>71</sup> Later the Fathers found themselves driven to make fuller use of that language in order to minister to the Indian wives of Portuguese and to others who had become Christians.

Public discussions, of the kind so often mentioned during the time of the first mission, had not entirely ceased, but seem to have been sporadic rather than frequent. On occasion the Fathers, relying on the protection of the emperor, spoke with more frankness than prudence. A Muslim who was friendly to the Fathers, having heard them accuse the Prophet Muhammad of various vices and crimes, urged them to speak cautiously of the Islamic religion, as he himself, although the Fathers' friend, 'boiled with indignation and felt himself inclined to stab them with his dagger, when he heard them arguing against Muhammad'.<sup>72</sup>

Two activities distinguished the third mission from the other two – the serious attempt to create a Christian literature in Persian, and extensive use

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of the liturgical ceremonies of the Christian church to bring home to the people the meaning of the Gospel and of Christian worship.

Xavier had early come to the conclusion that violent controversy was not the right method of winning over the Muslims: 'the sword is not a key giving admission to the heart, never, never! It is reasons, instruction, good example, tenderness and benefits that open well-locked hearts. That key was used by Jesus Christ, our Lord, whereas Muhammad wielded the sword.'<sup>73</sup> The Christian controversialist must retain his liberty to speak freely, but he must be actuated by the love of truth and not by any malicious intention.<sup>74</sup>

Only divine grace, can bring the Muslim to saving faith such as leads to salvation; but, before conversion can be expected to take place, rational demonstration must first have done its work. This is specially important in dealing with Muslims, since they argue that theirs is a rational religion and that its articles of faith can be proved by rational arguments. Thus Xavier falls into the succession of the great Christian apologists of the late middle ages, and especially of Ramon Llull (1235-1316) who also undertook to demonstrate the articles of the Christian faith by *rationes necessariae*, but at the same time checked all his arguments in the light of an intimate and accurate knowledge of the Muslim faith.

By far the most important of the controversial works of Xavier is the *Fuente de Vida*, the 'Fountain of Life', written by him in Portuguese and laboriously translated into Persian with the help of the best scholars that he could find. For more than three centuries this majestic work of 540 pages was known only in its Persian form. But Dr A. Camps was fortunate enough to find, in the Roman archives of the Society of Jesus, a Spanish text, which seems to be contemporary and may possibly be the work of Xavier himself. The nature of the work is here precisely described: 'Herein are declared the things of the religion of the Gospel, and reasons are given for the principal mysteries of the same, and the religions which are contrary to the same are controverted.'<sup>75</sup>

The *Fount of Life* takes the form of a dialogue between a Jesuit Father, a Muslim scholar and a philosopher, 'a scholar in human philosophy but very averse to every divine law'. As the philosopher does not believe in miracles and does not admit the Christian scriptures to be superior to scriptures which the adherents of other religions equally hold to be true, there is nothing to be done but to fall back on unaided human reason, and to see how far it will carry us. The Father lays down three criteria for judging the truth of any religion: 'It has to teach mankind to know God in the most sublime manner; it has to instruct mankind to serve God and to accomplish his will in a spiritual manner, since God is a spiritual and not a corporeal being; it should provide mankind with the aids necessary to weak human nature in order to fulfil God's will.'<sup>76</sup>

The philosopher is convinced, perhaps a little too easily, by the

arguments of the Father.<sup>77</sup> The Muslim scholar is an altogether tougher proposition, and will not yield easily to the power of what is set before him as Christian truth. Dr Camps judges the second disputation to be 'an extremely logical, harmonious and well-ordered treatise', and to be superior to the first as being realistic in character. 'The discussion by no means gives an impression of artificiality. Both the Muslim and the Christian stand-points, which are equally well reproduced, contain reflections of the usual manner of disputing between Muslims and Christians.'<sup>78</sup>

One of the concerns of Xavier was to have at hand a reliable translation of the Koran. He wrote repeatedly to Europe, asking for a translation of the Koran in Latin, Italian, Spanish or Portuguese; and, when at last the promised copy arrived, was not a little chagrined to find that it was in Arabic and not in any one of the languages asked for: 'We have no end of them here.'<sup>79</sup> He reports that, in the absence of a translation such as he had asked for, he has had the Koran translated into Persian and from Persian into Portuguese, an immense task which he is not likely to have carried out himself.

It has been reported from time to time that Xavier translated or arranged for others to translate the Gospels into Persian. This does not seem to correspond with the facts. What he did was to revise and improve an older and existing translation. A somewhat romantic story is told as to the way in which this earlier translation fell into the hands of the Fathers. The Armenians in Lahore had been expecting the arrival of an archbishop, but their archbishop . . . died on his way to India. Having reached Ormuz, he had been prevented from continuing his journey by sea and set out for Lahor by way of Persia. He perished on the road unsuccoured by God or man. His books and all else he possessed were stolen. The former fell into the hands of Fr Pinheiro, which greatly annoyed the Armenians who had desired to present them to the king. They thought that the prelate was coming to India to be archbishop of the Serra . . . but that office was filled in a different manner, as will appear later.<sup>80</sup>

Whatever the exact circumstances under which the Persian Gospels came into the hands of Xavier,<sup>81</sup> it seems clear that he arranged for the manuscript to be corrected and copied, and that he then sent copies in a number of different directions, including some despatched to Rome. He refers to translations more than 300 years old.<sup>82</sup> Xavier's concern for correction arose from the divergences in the Persian from the Latin Vulgate, which had been declared by the Council of Trent to be alone authoritative.<sup>83</sup> It was a copy corrected in this fashion that was presented to the emperor Jahāngīr in March 1607.

This concern for a translation of the Gospels seems to mark a change in Jesuit missionary methods since the time of the older Xavier, who as we

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have seen never arranged for the translation of any part of the scriptures into any Indian language. The change was probably due to the exigencies of a mission to Muslims. The hearers knew of the existence of the *injīl* (Gospel), though they had never seen it; in view of their insistence on the perfection of the Koran, it was essential to be able to confront them with a Scripture in their own tongue, which the Fathers asserted to be of higher value even than the Koran.<sup>84</sup>

During a period of about ten years the Fathers were in almost constant attendance on Akbar. When he paid a visit to Kashmir in 1597, Xavier and Goes were with him. Similarly, when Akbar left for the Deccan, where he stayed for more than two years, he was accompanied by the same pair of Jesuits. Goes left Agra on 6 January 1603 to carry out his famous journey to China. In October 1605 the Jesuits at Lahore were Xavier and Machado, who had joined the mission in 1602; in Agra, Pinheiro, the 'Mogul', and Corsi, who had arrived in 1600, held the fort.

#### 7 NOT ALL WAS BRIGHT

From the start the Fathers had found work to do among the Europeans scattered in the Mughul dominions. These were a most miscellaneous collection, drawn from many races and keeping themselves alive by manifesting a variety of skills – merchants, lapidaries, enamellers, goldsmiths, physicians, surgeons and artisans of all descriptions, and very commonly artillerymen in the Mughul army.<sup>85</sup> Many of these men were deserters or renegades. Almost all were adventurers, and almost all had formed irregular unions with Muslim or Hindu women. They had forgotten all that they knew of the Christian faith, and were not always pleased to be reminded of its existence. The bad example set by them was one of the great hindrances to the spread of the Gospel. Yet congregations did come into existence in Agra and Lahore, and the Indian wives of these aliens formed a not unimportant part of the Christian communities.

A second important element in the Christian church was made up of the Armenians. Some of these were Armenians only in the general sense indicated above; others, however, really were Armenians by race and language, and were therefore members of what the Fathers regarded as an heretical church.<sup>86</sup> Regular ministrations of their own church seem only rarely to have been available to these exiles. Some accepted the Roman Catholic form of the Christian faith,<sup>87</sup> but even with those who did not the Fathers seem to have maintained friendly and generous relations. In one recorded case the Fathers were indebted to a young Armenian 'of very honourable disposition' for a notable piece of service. After the capture of

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Asirgarh (1601) by the Mughul forces, a number of half-caste Portuguese had been reduced to slavery by the victors. The Fathers set themselves to recover these unfortunates, and were successful in securing their release. But there remained the problem of the wives, daughters and other relatives who had been left behind. The Armenian paid their debts and brought them back, 'trusting to the Fathers to repay him for what he had spent, which they did very willingly, thanking him for having done so good a work'.<sup>88</sup> After they had reached Agra, baptism was administered to those who had not received it, and a number were regularly married according to the laws of the church. And so they settled down to live 'like honest men, keeping the commandments of God and the Church, and recognising very clearly the truth of the Christian faith, and the grace which God has shewn them in receiving them into his fold'.<sup>89</sup>

The main purpose of the mission was, however, as it had always been, to reach the Indian population with the message of the Gospel. One of the principal methods adopted by the Fathers was the manifestation of the faith to a largely illiterate population through eye-gate – by way of images, pictures, processions and the splendour of liturgical ceremonial.

Many examples are given in the contemporary records of the effects achieved by pictures of sacred subjects. This may seem strange in a Muslim society, in which the ban on any representation of the human form is technically in force. But this was a law to which the Mughuls sat singularly loose – Indian art has been immensely enriched by the miniatures painted for them or at their courts.<sup>90</sup> Akbar himself was interested in the arts, and was much pleased with some of the pictures presented to him by the Fathers.

The most elaborate account of the display of a picture, and of the attraction exercised by it on the crowds, is that provided by du Jarric in his narrative of the years 1601–2. A picture of our Lady, copied from one in Rome, had been received by the Fathers; at Christmastide 1601 they decided to exhibit it in the church. Almost at once crowds began to gather, and received in their own language an account of what the picture signified, after which they went away 'full of veneration for the Virgin, and deeply impressed by her sanctity'. During the first days most of those who came were of the lower orders, and, being Hindus, were prepared to be interested in what may have reminded them of things already familiar in their own religion:

But on the third and following days men of learning, who are called Mullas, began to come, as well as nobles and others of rank, who had before deemed it discreditable to enter a Christian church. The example of these great ones was followed by people of every sort and quality. By counting those who entered the church on a particular day, it was shown that the daily attendance exceeded ten thousand persons.<sup>91</sup>



### *Not All was Bright*

The great festivals of the Christian year were celebrated with every kind of solemnity. In 1598 the Christmas crib was exposed at Lahore for twenty days, and visited by between three and four thousand people.<sup>92</sup> On Easter morning there would be a procession through the streets, headed by musicians, followed by the Christians in their festal garments and carrying candles in their hands; the Fathers followed them wearing their surplices and singing at the tops of their voices. In a letter of 6 September 1604 Xavier describes in considerable detail the way in which the sacred season was observed:

The offices for Holy Week are simply recited, but the other ceremonies are carried out with all solemnity. The washing of the feet is performed fully with great devotion and consolation. All go to confession during Lent; and on Maundy Thursday and Easter day more than forty persons of both sexes who a few years ago were followers of Muhammad received Holy Communion . . . May God keep them and advance them in perfection every day. Amen.<sup>93</sup>

Naturally the most important events of all were the baptisms of converts. It is impossible to determine with any precision how many Indians were baptised in the first ten years of the third mission. In 1599 Fr Pinheiro reports that in six months or so thirty-eight persons had been baptised in Lahore.<sup>94</sup> Under the year 1600, du Jarric, following Guerreiro, reports that 'In the course of this year, the Fathers baptized on one occasion thirty-nine persons, on another twenty, and on a third occasion forty-seven. The last of these services was conducted with great solemnity on the Octave of the Assumption of our Lady [August 22], and was largely attended both by Christians and by infidels.'

For 1604, Fr Pinheiro relates sadly that 'the events above related closed the door to conversions during the year so that we have not any to relate'.

In this mission, as in others, we have always to allow for the baptisms of infants *in articulo mortis*, which were often included in the statistics and swelled the figures. There is a notable example of this in connection with the great famine in the vale of Kashmir in 1597, at which time Xavier and Goes were in that area in the train of the emperor. The mothers would put their children in the streets to die, and the Fathers would then collect and baptise them. Sometimes the mothers would themselves call on the priests to baptise their children at the point of death. When they were about to leave the valley, one woman besought them to take charge of her child.<sup>95</sup>

The baptism of older persons was made an occasion of great solemnity, often accompanied by processions through the streets. A letter of Fr Pinheiro of the year 1599 describes the baptism of two Hindus converted against the will of their relations. On Whitsunday they were led in procession through the city with palms in their hands, and 'then having

passed through a large and somewhat noisy multitude to the church, were therein baptised'. Pinheiro adds the interesting circumstances that a Muslim girl aged sixteen, seeing this baptism taking place, insisted on being baptised herself. Having convinced the Father that she understood very well what she was doing, she was baptised with the Christian name of Grace; and, having resisted all attempts of her relatives to get her back, was not long after married to a Christian.<sup>96</sup>

Undoubtedly the majority of the converts came from the poorer ranks of society, as is natural in that hierarchically ordered world. The Italian traveller Gianbattista Vechiete, who was in Agra in 1604 notes that the Christians were *della gente bassa* ('of the lower classes'), and Xavier at a slightly later date used almost exactly the same expression – *gente comun e baixa* ('common people of the lower orders').<sup>97</sup> But there were a number of converts of higher station, who certainly had nothing to gain from their change of faith. Du Jarric gives at great length the story of a young man, whose name is given as Polada,<sup>98</sup> a Brāhman and a *paṇḍit*, who enrolled himself as a catechumen. Every possible means, including the use of poison and of violence, was used to turn him from his new faith. The only result was that his wife decided to follow her husband. Threatened with death, the young man replied,

Do your will. I am quite ready to die, for this has long been my greatest desire. It is a very strange thing that when any Gentile wishes to become a Iogue, or a Mahometan, there is none to stand in his way; but when he wishes to become a Christian, it seems that the Devil and hell are leagued against him to turn him from his purpose.

At last the catechumen was brought before 'the king's Cazique'. He was first required to sign a deed divesting himself of all his property and of everything that he was heir to; he was then handed over to the custody of Fr Pinheiro.<sup>99</sup>

In all these records there is hardly anything about any attempt on the part of the Fathers to perpetuate the work of the mission by preparing local Christians to serve as catechists or later as priests, perhaps because of the scattered nature of the congregations and the difficulty of providing supervision. Only one definite notice has come to light in the sources available. In a letter dated 1 December 1600 the Visitor Nicolas Pimenta records that on 2 January of that year

we met nine young men of Hindustan whom Fr Pinheiro had sent from the city of Lahore via Sind. Another had joined them who among them is regarded as very noble (because descended from Muhammad) and who more than once has strenuously fought in defence of the Christian religion . . . Of these nine young men we kept four at Bandora in order that they might be taught by the best masters

## *The Last Days of the Great Akbar*

every kind of musical instrument for the new church at Lahore. A fifth entered our Society in the College of Santa Fé [St Paul] together with another young man of rare talent who had tried to study the Korān at Mecca itself and had learned a good part of it by heart, [but later] bent his head to receive the holy waters of baptism.<sup>100</sup>

Unfortunately Pimenta does not give any names. There seem to be no further records of the young men who went to Goa, nor is there any evidence that either of them was ordained to the priesthood.

### 8 THE LAST DAYS OF THE GREAT AKBAR

Through good report and ill report the Fathers had clung to the hope that one day Akbar would be converted. For all his genuine and long-continued friendliness to them, they were deceiving themselves in imagining that he could ever make the change. He was bound to consider the chaos that would follow in the empire, if he adopted a religion which was cordially detested by the majority of his subjects.

In the year 1605 Akbar, who was then sixty-three years of age, completed fifty years of rule. In September of that year he fell seriously ill, and it became clear that he had not long to live. On the night of 25/26 October he died. The Fathers had made strenuous attempts to see him; 'but they could find no one who would make their arrival known to the king, or dare to speak to him of them; for already such matters were more in the hands of his great nobles than of the king himself, and hence every means by which the Fathers tried to gain entrance was ineffectual'.<sup>101</sup>

Akbar remained conscious long enough to fix the succession to the throne on his eldest son Sālim. Then he suffered his last agonies, attended only by a few of his most faithful retainers. 'They sought to put him in mind of their Mahomet; but he made no sign of assent; only it seemed that from time to time he tried to utter the name of God.'<sup>102</sup>

Attempts were made from time to time to show that Akbar was a Christian when he died. But for this there really was no ground. Du Jarric is probably right in saying that 'he died as he had lived, for as no one knew what law he followed in his life-time, so none knew that in which he died'. Attempts to prove that he died a Muslim are equally fruitless. One report has it that on his death-bed Akbar repeated the Muslim confession of faith after the *mufti*, speaking in a loud and clear voice. But this is almost certainly due to a desire to cover up the fact that Akbar did not die a Muslim.<sup>103</sup> Xavier, who knew him so well, was surely right when he wrote that Akbar 'died neither as a Moor nor as a Christian, but in the Gentile sect which he had embraced'.<sup>104</sup>

When Akbar died, men knew that a great man and a great ruler had

### *Akbar and the Jesuits*

passed from among them. Something of the esteem in which he was held breathes in what the Christians wrote about him:

He was a prince beloved of all, firm with the great, kind to those of low estate, and just to all men, high or low, neighbour or stranger, Christian, Muslim or Hindu . . . He lived in the fear of God, to whom he never failed to pray four times daily, at sunrise, at sunset, at midday and at midnight, and, despite his many duties, his prayers on these four occasions . . . were never curtailed . . . Akbar was one of the most fortunate monarchs of his time . . . Scarcely ever did he engage in any enterprise which he did not bring to a successful conclusion . . . but he missed the greatest thing of all: the knowledge of the true God and his only Son Jesus Christ who came to save mankind.<sup>105</sup>

Fr Monserrate, who knew the great king in his prime, has left a vivid portrait of him:

He was in face and stature fit for the dignity of a king, so that anybody even at the first glance would easily recognise him as the king . . . His brow was broad and open, and his eyes sparkled as does the sea when lighted by the sun. When he laughs he is distorted, but when he is tranquil and serene he has a noble mien and great dignity. In his wrath he is majestic.<sup>106</sup>

The death of Akbar did indeed mark a turning-point in history. With him the Mughul empire passed its zenith, though this did not immediately appear. None of his successors was his equal or near to being so. The empire had begun its long decline, though that which had taken eighty years to rise took a hundred and sixty years to sink to the point at which it became clear that another power had effectively taken its place. Portuguese power in the East, and with it Portuguese supremacy in Christian missions, had equally reached its apogee, though in this case close on two hundred years were to pass before that which had taken a hundred years to build was to descend to its final and irrecoverable collapse.

## 9 · Rome and the Thomas Christians

### I CONTACTS BETWEEN CHRISTIANS WESTERN AND EASTERN

The Thomas Christians had lived for centuries in their small world between the mountains and the sea, in almost total isolation from the rest of Christendom. Only occasionally did some sounds reach them from that outer and unknown world and disturb for a moment the stillness of their existence. Such contacts as came their way were mainly with the patriarchate of Babylon, from which their episcopal succession was maintained, somewhat irregularly, and as our sources suggest with considerable intervals during which there was no bishop in the Serra.<sup>1</sup> So, when the great ships of a Western power arrived in the harbour of Cochin, there was not unnaturally great jubilation among the local Christians.

During the second voyage of Vasco da Gama formal contact was made between the Eastern and the Western Christians. On 19 November 1502 a number of Christians of distinguished appearance came to Cochin from Mangalor,<sup>2</sup> greeted da Gama in the name of their king, presented him with a 'rod of justice', a painted staff red in colour, both ends plated in silver with three bells of silver at each end, and assured him that from that time they would not administer justice or pronounce judgement against any malefactor except in the name of the king of Portugal. They claimed to represent a population of 30,000 adults, and expressed a hope that the king of Portugal would build a fort in their country, from which he could control the entire neighbourhood.

So far the sober narrative of Thomas Lopes, a usually reliable witness.<sup>3</sup> Almost all the Portuguese chroniclers dwell on this event, adding to it picturesque details, and perhaps attributing to it greater importance than it possessed in reality.<sup>4</sup> Gouvea adds the ridiculous statement that the Christians supplied the rājā of Cochin with an army of fifty thousand gunmen, who are such good shots that they rarely miss. He further tells us that at one time the Thomas Christians had had a king named Beliarte, but that when their dynasty came to an end, the rājā of Cochin 'claimed to have

### *Rome and the Thomas Christians*

more jurisdiction and right over these Christians than the other rājās in whose lands they dwelt'.<sup>5</sup>

The confusion in these accounts is typical of the mixture of fact and fantasy which meets us in all the records of the Thomas Christians in the sixteenth century.

How many Thomas Christians were there when the first contacts were made with the Portuguese? Lopes mentions 30,000 adults, implying a total population of at least 45,000. Barros speaks of more than 30,000 persons. Gouvea suggests a much larger number. From other sources we gather that the Thomas Christians had sixty churches, by which we may understand parishes. It is unlikely that more than 600 Christians, on an average, would have been attached to each parish; we reach, therefore, by rough calculation, a maximum of 36,000 persons. This suggests that Barros may not have been far out in his reckoning. The Christians were gathered in considerable numbers in Cranganore and in Quilon, these representing roughly the northern and the southern limits of the territory in which they were found; but the majority were scattered far and wide over the hills, in many cases not more than three or four families being found together.

The Christians had to deal all the time with local rulers, who were many, and almost all of whom were Hindus. There are in the records constant complaints of high-handed action on the part of these rulers and infringement of the rights of the Christians. The actions of these rulers towards their Hindu and Muslim subjects were often capricious and at times oppressive; a minority community such as the Christians might naturally come off rather worse than groups which were both larger and more closely related to the sovereigns. On the other hand, the Christians had so long been there, and had come to be so much taken for granted as part of the local scene, that only in rare cases is it possible to apply the term 'persecution' to such hardships as the Christians had to endure.

It must be regarded as unlikely that the Christians ever had a king of their own.<sup>6</sup> If they ever had a protector named Beliarte, it is probable that he was a Hindu rather than a Christian. We are told that he ruled from Koyoor, and that as a price for his protection the Christians were bound to pay him an annual tax, and also to recognise him as defender and protector of the Thomas Christians.<sup>7</sup> Whatever their relations to other rulers, there is no reason to doubt that the Thomas Christians had leaders of their own, who seem to have had considerable powers of jurisdiction among them. If a time came when it proved impossible to maintain their rights against the aggressions of Hindu rulers, it might seem not unreasonable to call in as protector a distant but apparently immensely powerful Christian authority, such as they realised the king of Portugal to be.

So the scene is set for the story of intrigue, alliance, hostility and

## *Eastern Bishops Enter the Scene*

reconciliation, which is the history of Kerala in the sixteenth century. The four main powers were the Hindu rulers, the Thomas Christians, the Portuguese political authorities, and the Portuguese ecclesiastics. But even this does not give a complete picture of the complexities of the story. Portuguese clerics were by no means always in agreement. The Franciscans rarely saw eye to eye with the Jesuits, and neither had a high opinion of the secular clergy. Among the Thomas Christians were northists and southists;<sup>8</sup> some were friendly to the Portuguese, others, more passionately attached to their ancient traditions, were from the start suspicious of them.

### 2 EASTERN BISHOPS ENTER THE SCENE

The Indian church had at times been left without bishops. But just at the end of the fifteenth century this defect was remedied through an initiative taken by the Indian church itself. Three Christians had been sent from India in 1490 to the catholicos, Mar Simon, patriarch of the East. One died on the way, but the other two arrived safely. What followed is best described in the words of a letter sent out in 1504 by Eastern prelates at that time resident in India:

The Catholicos . . . was greatly pleased with them. One of them was called George and the other Joseph. The Catholicos ordained both of them priests in the holy church of St George at Gazarta, because they were well instructed, and sent them to the holy monastery of St Eugenius. They took from there two monks, the name of both of whom was Joseph, and the Catholicos ordained both of them bishops in the church of St George. He named one Thomas and the other John, and wrote to them admirable letters patent signed with his own seal. After having prayed for them and blessed them, he despatched them to India in the company of the Indians. By the assistance of Christ our Lord, the four of them reached there alive.<sup>9</sup>

The first-named Joseph was later to become well-known as Joseph the Indian. When Cabral, who made the second Portuguese voyage to India, was about to leave Cochin and sail home, he received an urgent request from two brothers, Joseph and Mathias, that he would take them on his ship, as they desired to go to Lisbon and Rome, and from there to Jerusalem and to Armenia<sup>10</sup> to see their patriarch. Cabral was pleased with their request and readily granted it. Mathias died on the way, but Joseph survived to undergo a whole series of adventures. In Venice he was interviewed by an interlocutor, who admittedly found it difficult to understand all that he said, and gave an account not only of his travels but also of the church of which he was a member. All this was made up into a little book *The Travels of Joseph the Indian*. For many years this was regarded as a primary authority for the affairs of the Thomas Christians at the beginning of the sixteenth century; but some of the statements in the work are so outrageously improbable that later times have generally written Joseph off as a mere romancer. Perhaps

### *Rome and the Thomas Christians*

posterity has been too hard on him. The book became generally known through its inclusion in the work published in Basel in 1532 by Simon Grynaeus and known as *Novus Orbis Regionum ac Insularum veteribus incognitarum*. But it was known that Grynaeus had taken considerable liberties in translating the Italian into Latin, and that a much more reliable account of what Joseph said is to be found in a work published in Vicenza in 1507.<sup>11</sup> One detail recorded by Joseph is interesting and may well be authentic. The Thomas Christians used wine in the Eucharist, if they had it; but, if they had no wine, they soaked raisins in water and used the resulting liquid; raisins were regularly brought by merchants from China.<sup>12</sup>

The story of the bishops despatched from Mesopotamia to India continues as follows:

[When these four came], the faithful were greatly pleased with them, and went to meet them joyfully with Gospels, cross, thurible and candles, and ushered them in with great pomp and psalms and canticles. They consecrated altars and ordained many priests, because the Indians were for a long time without bishops. Bishop John remained in India, and Bishop Thomas, his companion, returned after a short time to the Catholics.

The interest of the Mesopotamian church in the church in India had been revived by the despatch of the first two bishops. In 1503 the new patriarch Elias V decided to strengthen the work by the consecration of four further bishops. The first of these Raban David, surnamed 'the long' (*Arrtkha*) was given the name Yahb Alaha and appointed metropolitan. With him were George, Mar Denha in religion, and Raban Masud, called Mar Jacob. The fourth may have been Mar Thomas – there is considerable uncertainty as to the names and careers of these bishops. The four were instructed to go not only to India but also to the islands of the sea that are between Dabag (Java), Sin (China) and Ma-Sin (Great China = Japan?). It is unlikely that there were any Christians in these areas at that time, or that any of these bishops ever reached them.<sup>13</sup>

On reaching India the bishops put in first at Cannanore, and introduced themselves as Christians to the twenty or so Portuguese who were living there. They were most kindly received, and helped with clothes and money. They stayed for about two and a half months. Before they left, they were invited to celebrate the holy mysteries after their own fashion: 'They prepared for it a beautiful place fit for prayer, where there was a kind of oratory . . . Therefore on the Sunday *Nosardel* [seven days after Pentecost], after their priests had celebrated, we also were admitted and celebrated the Holy Sacrifice, and it was pleasing in their eyes.'

From Cannanore the bishops went on to discover the Thomas Christians, and were glad to find that one of the original bishops, Mar John, was still



### *The Portuguese Take a Hand*

alive. The Christians were reported to be in a state of considerable prosperity and to have need of nothing; some of them had begun to build new churches.

Three of these bishops remain shadowy figures. But Mar Jacob was destined to survive till 1549, and to play a very important role in the life of the Thomas Christians during that long period.

Friendly relations had by now been established between the Thomas Christians and the Portuguese, who in various places were their neighbours. These relations were from the first compromised by a fatal misunderstanding that was later to be the cause of much embitterment. From the start the Portuguese had no difficulty in accepting the Thomas Christians as Christians on a basis of mutual recognition and friendship. They showed sympathetic understanding for the differences in rite and customs which had grown up during the long isolation in which these Christians had lived, but they were confident that these defects could easily be rectified; their new friends would rejoice to find themselves under the jurisdiction of the great patriarch of the West, and would learn quietly to abandon the heresies of Nestorius which they had been beguiled into accepting in the dark days before the coming of the Portuguese. What the Portuguese failed from the start, and through long years, to understand was the intensity of the attachment of the Thomas Christians to the ancient ways and in particular to Syriac their liturgical language. They did not regard themselves as being in any way inferior to the Christians of the West; what they had received from the Great Thomas himself they would maintain to their dying day. They did not deny that in certain respects improvements were possible. But images they would not have, very naturally, living as they did in an idolatrous country; and, whatever respect they might be persuaded to accord to the distant pope, this must not be allowed in any way to diminish their regard for the nearer patriarch to whom they had always been profoundly attached. Those who lived in the neighbourhood of the great Portuguese centres came in time to be deeply influenced by them; the majority who lived in remote places in the hills were subject to no such influences, and, when the time came, would show that their ancient loyalties had been neither weakened nor undermined.

### 3 THE PORTUGUESE TAKE A HAND

Not many days passed before the Thomas Christians found occasion to ask the help of their new friends from the west. They were much concerned that their rights of civil and criminal jurisdiction among themselves should not be infringed by the Hindu rulers. Albuquerque was able to assure them that

### *Rome and the Thomas Christians*

their rights had been safeguarded in the treaty which he had concluded with the queen of Quilon, and that his factor had been instructed to see to it that the terms of the treaty were strictly adhered to. In gratitude for this favour, the Christians wished to send to the king of Portugal the golden cross which was the principal ornament of their church. Albuquerque replied that he would take only a silver cross 'as a sign that there were Christians in that land who worshipped the Cross whereon our Lord Jesus Christ had suffered; for this was (as it were) the gold with which the king of Portugal would be most pleased'.<sup>14</sup>

It is further recorded that Albuquerque left with them Fr Rodrigo, a Dominican, 'and he took such care during the days that he was there that with his teaching and good example he converted many heathen to the faith of Jesus Christ, and baptized many Christians thirty and forty years of age, as they did not remember whether they had been baptized or not'.<sup>15</sup> This note raises interesting questions about the state of the Thomas Christians. Were the priests so few that in many places baptism was not administered? Or does this indicate the survival of the ancient custom that only the bishop baptised?<sup>16</sup> If that were so, in times when there was no bishop there would have been no baptisms, and this would explain how it came about that so many adults did not know whether they had been baptised or not. When the opportunity was offered, they had apparently no objection to being baptised by a Western priest.

The attempts of the Portuguese to bring the Thomas Christians into conformity with every detail of Roman doctrine and practice seem to have begun with Fr Alvaro Penteadó, a priest who came to India in 1510 or 1511 of his own volition, and after some years in Goa was sent by the Portuguese governor to Cranganore to care for the Thomas Christians since 'that has the head and primacy among them'. Our main authority for the work of Penteadó is a letter written by him, probably in 1518. Penteadó is condemned out of his own mouth as one of those narrow-minded Roman Catholic priests, of whom Bishop Roz was later to complain so bitterly, as not understanding anything at all that was not of the Roman rite and condemning everything else at once as heresy and superstition.<sup>17</sup> Everything was to be done according to the Roman rite and everything else was to be classed simply as 'error'. Penteadó managed to quarrel with the 'chief priest' of Cranganore, who may have been none other than Joseph the Indian, and who forbade his Portuguese colleague to enter the principal church in Cranganore.

The bad impression which Penteadó gives of himself is confirmed by others. The vicar general Sebastian Pires writes to King John III from Cochin in 1527,

### *The Portuguese Take a Hand*

Your majesty sent Fr Alvaro Penteadó there, but he does not seem to me the right man, for he is extremely obstinate and has a very hot temper; and the people, who have been Christians from the time of St Thomas, are very little satisfied with him, and this they told me already many times . . . with me these Christians are on good terms.<sup>18</sup>

Even more significant is the protest of the gentle Mar Jacob to King John that Penteadó was baptising Christians, using the full and to them unfamiliar ritual of the Roman church:

Do not imagine that I am so innocent and so ignorant in matters of religion that I do not know the sacred Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments in all that pertains to the question of baptism, even though it be the case that I am not instructed in the usages of the popes and in the Roman usage. But if, even in spite of this, you give orders that I am to allow the said Alvaro Penteadó and other Fathers to baptize, I will permit it. But, as it seems to me, you will forfeit the friendship of these Christians, since they hold me in great respect, and do not wish that anyone else should baptize as long as I am alive.<sup>19</sup>

Mar Jacob writes in even stronger terms in a letter of 30 December 1530: 'I do not take Fr Alvaro Penteadó with me when I go there . . . I do not dare to do so for fear of the people, who are not on very good terms with him.'<sup>20</sup>

Not all Roman Catholics were as unpleasant as Fr Penteadó. Fr Vincent de Lagos had been one of the companions of the first bishop of Goa John d'Albuquerque on his voyage to India in 1538. Not a single writer of the time has a word to say against him; he made on all, and not least on Francis Xavier, a deep impression of sincerity, zeal and devotion. Vincent, as convinced as any of his contemporaries that the Thomas Christians must be brought into complete conformity with Rome at every point, had seen that the only way in which this could be brought about was the replacement of the old race of *cattanārs* (priests), deeply imbued as these were with the ancient customs of the Eastern churches, by a new race of young priests, into whom from their youth up the hitherto unfamiliar customs of the Roman church had been instilled. A college for the training of Indian priests must be brought into being. The Thomas Christians were deeply attached to their ancient customs and usages, and so held the Indian clergy in far deeper affection than the European priests, though the latter were of notably better quality than the former.<sup>21</sup>

The place chosen was Cranganore. Plans for the building of a Portuguese fort at this great centre of the Thomas Christians had been made as early as 1524. But the project languished, and it was not until 1536 that building work was taken seriously in hand. By 1540 all was in readiness, and this was the date chosen also for the foundation of the college of St James. The name

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indicated what was to be expected of this college. If it had been called after St Thomas, it might have been supposed that it was to be a college on Indian lines. Instead of this, here there was to be nothing that would remind the pupils of their origin and of their old traditions.

Vincent had, however, been prudent enough to secure ecclesiastical approval for his work. Mar Jacob had realised the contribution that the better education now offered by the Portuguese might make to the future well-being of the Thomas Christians. When he arrived from Mesopotamia in 1503 he had found few *cattanārs*, and those not well instructed in the faith. There was no seminary and no tradition of theological learning. The priests were chosen regularly from a number of leading families, and it was held to be an honour to have a priest in the family. But candidates were not always numerous. The intending *cattanār* would spend some time with an older priest, and would learn from him enough Syriac to enable him to carry out the complex ceremonies of the liturgy, and enough theology to qualify him to give elementary religious instruction to children. But that was all.<sup>22</sup> The *cattanārs* rarely preached. They were not qualified to build up an Indian tradition in theology, or to carry on evangelistic work among the non-Christians around them. To Mar Jacob higher education for his clergy must have seemed an attractive idea.

The college seems from the start to have been in favour with the Thomas Christians even more than with Vincent's Franciscan brethren in Cochin.<sup>23</sup> It was not long before boys began to come in, and by 1548 Vincent had a flock of seventy pupils, many of them from the best families among the Thomas Christians.<sup>24</sup>

From accounts that have been preserved it is clear that the college was in point of fact a seminary.<sup>25</sup> The boys spent a great deal of their time in church or in processions. Study was mainly of the Latin and Portuguese languages, no attention being paid to Syriac or Malayālam, except that some boys may have learnt enough Syriac to enable them to celebrate the Eastern *Qurbāna*. The liturgy was invariably that of the Roman rite. It was taken for granted that the Portuguese bishop of Goa, and later of Cochin, was their bishop and that, when the time for ordinations came, these would be performed by the foreign bishop and not by Mar Jacob.<sup>26</sup>

Testimonies in favour of the college and of the excellent work carried on there are not lacking. Already in 1545 Xavier was telling the king of Portugal that

within a few years we may hope that religious men will emerge from that college, who will bring the whole of Malabar, how deeply sunk it may be at the present time in vices and errors, to a saving sense of shame at its miserable condition and will bring to those blind minds the light of Christ and will manifest his name.<sup>27</sup>

### *Bishops – Syrian and Others*

Three years later John Pereira, the captain of Cochin, writes to the king that the students

are of such good life and doctrine as I never expected in these parts. Among them there are already three clerics of the mass [priests], ten of the epistle and Gospel [sub-deacon and deacon]. On the first of this January one celebrated his first mass. And they are of such good life that Frey Vincent needs for this college no other colleague; his own boys with the help of God should produce much fruit, spreading themselves through the land with the good doctrine and example which are given by them.<sup>28</sup>

Great things were expected of the college. But in point of fact a fatal error had been built into its very foundation. It was believed that by Latinising a group of boys it would be possible to Latinise a whole church, and that this would be a good thing to do. Later years showed, what had already begun to be evident as early as 1540, that there was no art or device of man by which the Thomas Christians could be completely Latinised. In the early days parents were delighted with the quality of the education given to their sons, and by the effects of good Western discipline on their characters. Later they were dismayed to find aliens in their homes, and aliens so arrogant as to disparage the ancient ways of their people, and to accept as good nothing that did not fit in with what they had been taught in the college. It was found that priestlings from St James were wholly unacceptable in the parishes; they could find employment only in the missionary work of the church, or in parishes in which Portuguese was spoken. Many of the Indian priests mentioned in the records of the next forty years of the mission seem to have been waifs and orphans of this type; they remain shadowy and inconsiderable figures.<sup>29</sup>

#### 4 BISHOPS – SYRIAN AND OTHERS

It seems that about the year 1543 Mar Jacob, feeling the weight of years, withdrew from active direction of the affairs of the Serra and settled in the Franciscan convent of St Antony in Cochin (he had a long-standing friendship with the friars of that convent). Though not an outstanding leader, Mar Jacob was a man of great integrity highly respected by all who knew him. In a letter dated 26 January 1549 Xavier urges the king of Portugal to show him special favour:

There is a bishop from Armenia named Abuna Jacob, who for forty-five years has been serving God and your highness in these parts, a very old man, virtuous and holy and at the same time disfavoured by your highness and almost by all here in India . . . May it please your highness to write him a letter expressing much

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affection . . . he has been working much among the Thomas Christians, and moreover in his old age he has become highly obedient to the usages of our holy mother the church of Rome.<sup>30</sup>

Xavier is not suggesting, as some have supposed, that Mar Jacob had lost the confidence of his own people by going too far in the direction of Rome. The bishop had rendered considerable services to the Portuguese in making sure that they could buy good quality pepper at reasonable prices, and for this he had received no adequate reward. Now in his old age he did not so much need temporal help – the Franciscans were seeing to his needs; but it would be a gratification to him to know that he was held in honour by the king and that his services had not gone unrecognised.

How far had Mar Jacob gone in adapting himself to the ways of the Roman Catholic church?

Clear information on the subject is lacking. He was not a man who loved controversy. Living as he did among the Franciscans, he is not likely to have insisted on customs that would cause them offence. He certainly recognised the value of some Latin practices, and may have moved some distance towards the adoption of them. We are told by one authority that, being a virtuous man, he put an end to the tyranny, long established among the Thomas Christians, of charging a fee for baptism. He is also said to have introduced the custom of private confession, and to have translated into Syriac the Latin formula of absolution. Whether he went further than this must be regarded as doubtful. For the last seven years of his life he was living in a Franciscan convent where the Latin mass was celebrated every day. With few, if any, of his own people around him, he cannot have had many opportunities of celebrating the Syriac *Qurbāna* to which he had been accustomed from his boyhood. It may be taken as probable that he regularly attended the Latin service, and received communion at the hands of the Franciscans.<sup>31</sup>

One touching occurrence is related in connection with the death of Mar Jacob. On his death bed he asked his friend Pero Sequeira to redeem for him the copper-plate grant recording the privileges of the Thomas Christians, about which he had written to the king of Portugal in 1523, but which he had later given in pledge to a man in the interior for twenty cruzados. Before his death he had the happiness of knowing that this had been done.<sup>32</sup>

The first half century of relations between the Portuguese and the Thomas Christians were, in spite of misunderstandings, on the whole marked by cordiality and good will. Mar Jacob had maintained good relations with the Westerners throughout the long period of his episcopate, and was rewarded by the good opinions expressed by many concerning him. With his death the entire situation changed. There was a hardening of the Roman attitude

towards these Christians, now regarded as dissident, and a consequent and growing resentment among the Indian Christians at what they regarded as infringement of their rights and liberties.

The history of this remote corner of the Christian world cannot be considered in isolation from what was happening in other parts of the world nearer to the great centres of the Christian tradition. Since the fourth century the bishops of Rome had been engaged in a quiet but ceaseless struggle to impose their supremacy on the entire Christian world. This supremacy, as distinct from a certain primacy of the See of Peter, was never accepted by the Eastern churches, and was one of the many causes that underlie the lasting separation between East and West. At times Eastern patriarchs found it convenient to link themselves to Rome, as at the Council of Florence in 1415; but such links were soon severed by a patriotic and anti-Western reaction in the East. But the East itself was divided, and much of the history is the record of rivalries and contentions between patriarchs of one school or another and their followers.

When the modern period in history begins, the patriarchate of the East was located in Antioch, where the patriarch was recognised to be the successor of Peter, the first bishop of Antioch. In view of Zoroastrian, and later of Muslim, oppression, and of the difficulties of communication, much independence was granted to the catholicos of Seleucia, resident at Diarbekir in Mesopotamia. The catholicos claimed, and was recognised to have, the right to appoint bishops and metropolitans for the remoter areas, and these unquestionably included India. Attempts to have been made to show that these Eastern prelates were in communion with Rome;<sup>33</sup> but the evidence is less than convincing, and it is likely that the connections between Rome and this part of the Christian world, if they existed at all, were tenuous.

The question of authority was raised in dramatic form by events which took place in the year 1552. On the death of the catholicos Simon VII bar Māmā, a monk named John, abbot of the convent of Rabban Hormizd, was elected as catholicos and took the name Simon Sulākā.<sup>34</sup> This, however, did not satisfy all the bishops, since the custom had long been established (and was maintained until the twentieth century) that the catholicos should be succeeded by his nephew, and John did not stand in the right relationship to his predecessor. Accordingly a number of bishops chose Simon bar Denha, a nephew of Simon bar Māmā, to succeed to the vacant throne. Anxious to win the support of Rome against his rival, Sulākā made the long journey to Rome, and presented a confession of faith which proved acceptable. He did not long enjoy his powers, since on his return to his home in Mosul the rival party stirred up the enmity of the Turks against him, and in 1555 procured his assassination. The adherents of the pro-Roman party then elected one

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Ebed Jesu ('Abdišo') to succeed him; this was the 'Abdišo' who signed the acts of the Council of Trent as patriarch of Syria, India and China.

As soon as convenient Ebed Jesu took thought for his wider responsibilities, consecrated as bishops for India one Joseph the brother of Simon Sulākā with the title of Mar Joseph, and another as Mar Elias, and sent them off with the Maltese Dominican bishop Ambrose Buttigeg, who had been given to Mar Joseph as his companion and papal nuncio, to take charge of affairs in India. This action of Ebed Jesu, who had been chosen as loyal to the Roman cause, shows clearly that he assumed that he, and no one else, had the right to consecrate bishops for the Thomas Christians and to send them out in his name, and that no one else could claim any authority in the matter at all.

The new bishops arrived in Goa in November 1556, but their reception was not exactly what they had expected. Their credentials were perfectly in order, but every possible step was taken to prevent their reaching the Serra. The ecclesiastical authorities in Goa had already reached a firm determination to bring the Thomas Christians under the sole jurisdiction of the bishop of Rome; the civil authorities were one with them in this intention, and took the view that no Chaldaean bishops were in any circumstances to be admitted, especially as such bishops, whatever their professions, might be suspected of being crypto-Nestorians. So Ambrose Buttigeg was held at Goa, by no means the only bishop to find himself marooned in Goa for an indefinite period, and employed himself usefully in teaching and preaching. The two Chaldaeans were committed to the care of Antony da Porto SJ in Bassein.<sup>35</sup>

The two Eastern bishops made a favourable impression on all who met them by their sober, devout and disciplined life. 'They are so quiet and retiring, that they do not go out, unless absolutely necessary, spending all their time in prayer and contemplation, studying the sacred Scriptures and the saintly doctors.' At first they said mass only in Syriac. But gradually, isolated as they were in little Bassein, separated from all of their own kind and with absolutely nothing to do, they began to yield to the Latinising influences by which they were surrounded. Fr Antony tells us that he taught them to say mass in Latin with all the accessories of the Roman rite; after a little practice they were able to do this to the edification of all beholders. Fr Antony adds the interesting note that 'the only thing that is unusual is that their pronunciation is like that of Italians or Frenchmen'. He further explained to them the reasons for which they could not go to the Serra, as the bishop of Goa was the bishop of Malabar, 'and of the whole of India, and of all the other parts of the Orient conquered by your highness, and that no one without his leave could interfere with the Christians of those parts'. Fr Antony concludes his letter by urging that the king of Portugal should send



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a bishop to the Serra with a special mandate giving him authority over the Thomas Christians, and that he should ask the pope to inform the patriarch that he should in no circumstances send a bishop to the Serra.

After eighteen months Buttigeg and his companions managed to make their way by somewhat devious routes to the Serra. Buttigeg died in Cochin not long after his arrival,<sup>36</sup> and Mar Elias returned to his own archbishopric of Diarbekir in Mesopotamia.<sup>37</sup> Joseph was left alone, and, for the time being unhindered by the Portuguese, was able to minister to his fellow-churchmen, among whom, as it seems, he introduced the previously unknown rites of auricular confession, confirmation and extreme unction.<sup>38</sup>

Before long, however, doubts were raised as to the orthodoxy of Mar Joseph. He was apprehended and packed off to Goa, and thence to Lisbon. There he managed to secure the favour of the queen and of Cardinal Henry, the uncle of the king, and by them was sent back to India having fully cleared himself of all suspicion. He arrived in 1565. But his new freedom did not last long. The first Council of Goa, held in 1567, took up his case, and concluded that all the charges against him had been proved; so once again he was sent off to Portugal. From there he managed to make his way to Rome, and for the second time was able to prove his innocence to the satisfaction of the Roman authorities. He was just about to return to India, to be once again a thorn in the side of the Latinisers, when death relieved them of his unwelcome presence.

#### 5 THE MYSTERIOUS MAR ABRAHAM

Just about this time the Jesuits began to take a more active part in the affairs of the Thomas Christians. Fr Carneiro<sup>39</sup> was in Cochin, and while there received news that a heretical bishop, presumably a Nestorian, had arrived secretly and was at work in the remoter parts of the Serra, where he had perverted many.<sup>40</sup> This could not be endured; so Carneiro set himself to the task, never before undertaken by any of the Portuguese missionaries, of penetrating the inner parts of the Serra.<sup>41</sup> His account of his doings is rather confused, and the difficulty invariably experienced by the Portuguese in transcribing Indian names makes it difficult to follow his route. He does not seem to have travelled very far. He was in the 'pepper kingdom', Vadakkankur, and in the neighbourhood of Ankamali – in the absence of roads and amid wild scenery the distance may have seemed to him longer than it actually was. He was welcomed by one *cattanār*, who had adhered to the Roman ways, and was received eagerly by the common people, who had never before seen a missionary in their midst. But he was unsuccessful in his attempt to locate the elusive bishop, to bring him to a confrontation and to persuade him to abandon his Nestorian errors. In one church which he tried

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to enter he found his way barred by the *cattanār* in charge. Before reaching Ankamāli, he was warned not to proceed any further, since two thousand of the Christians had declared themselves *amoces* of the bishop, desperadoes prepared to sell their own lives in defence of his. Just at this moment an urgent message reached Carneiro from the patriarch of Ethiopia<sup>42</sup> bidding him come to Goa in order that he might be consecrated as assistant bishop for Ethiopia.<sup>43</sup> So Carneiro was fain to quit the Serra, with little effected, but leaving behind him the memory of a devoted missionary, and bringing with him a good deal of reliable information as to the state of the Thomas Christians at that time.

There were now two patriarchs of Babylon, one subject to the Roman obedience, and the other maintaining the ancient liberties of the Eastern churches. It seems clear that the independent patriarch, acting in response to a petition from the Serra, had consecrated a Thomas Christian as metropolitan, had given him the name Mar Abraham, and despatched him to India, where he arrived in or about the year 1565, and immediately found himself in rivalry with Mar Joseph. The Portuguese managed to arrest him and sent him off to Europe. But on the way he succeeded in escaping at Moçambique, whence he made his way to Mosul, and presented himself to Ebed Jesu ('Abdišo'), the pro-Roman patriarch. This prelate wrote to the archbishop of Goa, on 24 August 1567, that while Abraham was with him 'he helped him much in everything, and in all obedience to the great church of Rome; and, after he had consecrated him metropolitan, he had sent him with letters to our lord Pope Pius IV'.<sup>44</sup> Arrived in Rome, Abraham explained to the pope a dilemma in which he found himself. All the orders which he had received had been conferred in the independent Eastern church, and were therefore from the strict Roman point of view invalid. Ebed Jesu was unaware of this, when he consecrated him metropolitan. The pope agreed that the consecration in Mosul was highly dubious. In order to set all doubts at rest, he arranged for all the orders up to and including the episcopate to be quietly conferred on Mar Abraham, who thus for the third time found himself a mitred bishop, this time with the august approval of the Roman bishop himself. Being now satisfied of his orthodoxy and his obedience to the Roman See, the pope sent him off to the Serra, having requested the patriarch Ebed Jesu to divide the diocese between Mar Joseph and Mar Abraham. (This arrangement was never carried into effect, since Mar Joseph died in 1569.) Mar Abraham, having eluded the authorities in Goa, who as usual were suspicious and hostile, made his way to his diocese where he was acclaimed as the sole and undoubted metropolitan of the Serra.

Abraham's first task was to ordain all the priests whom he had ordained during his first visit to the Serra, since he now held that at that time he had not been a bishop.

### *The Mysterious Mar Abraham*

For the remaining twenty-six years of his life the situation of Mar Abraham was difficult and precarious. It is impossible to defend him against the charges of tergiversation and dishonesty in his dealings with the Portuguese; but his conduct may seem less odious if his difficulties are fairly considered. He seems to have been sincerely anxious to keep on good terms with the pope. At the same time it was clear to him that his primary loyalty was to the patriarch in Mosul, and that hindrances must be placed in the way of the policy of extreme Latinisation favoured by the Portuguese clerics and the civil authorities. When all this is borne in mind, he seems to have played his cards with considerable skill.

First he wrote to the patriarch, warning him of the intended aggression against his jurisdiction over the churches of the East. He attached a request from a number of the leading Thomas Christians to the effect that five bishops would be needed to care adequately for the Christians of the Serra, but that in no case should a Latin bishop be sent, since, in view of the deep attachment of the people to the Chaldaean bishops, the very life of a bishop of another sort would be in danger.

Next, Abraham asserted his independence against the Latin authorities. The Second Council of Goa had laid down<sup>45</sup> that the Christians of the Serra should be under the jurisdiction of a bishop sent by the king of Portugal and not from Chaldea. If this was not possible, the pope should instruct the archbishop of Ankamāli to attend the council, since he had no suffragans with whom to form a provincial council of his own, and because of the great distance it would be difficult for him to go to Syria. Abraham refused to go to Goa, and wrote to the pope defending his absence; he had no confidence at all in the Portuguese, and, in view of what had happened to other Eastern bishops, his attitude should cause no surprise. We have an interesting letter from the rājā of Cochin to the pope, in which he plumes himself on treating the Christians with no difference from others who are more directly his subjects, and defends the archbishop as duly 'obedient to the holy apostolic see' in spite of his failure to attend the council.<sup>46</sup> The pope sends a courteous reply, acknowledging the letter of the rājā, and expressing the wish that he may soon come to the recognition of that genuine and highest blessedness which the true religion teaches, and also to the adoption of the same.<sup>47</sup>

More important is a letter from the cardinal of Como, Peter Wenzel, to the pope, urging upon him the formal recognition of the archbishop, and also of the archdeacon, the importance of whose position in the affairs of the church had now become known to the authorities in Rome. The archbishop should be instructed to attend the next council, but '*senza timore di alcuna vessazione o molesta*'. The Portuguese bishops must be told to receive him with all honour as a prelate canonically elected. Also the archdeacon, George

(a worthy person, and very well suited for the administration of this diocese), should be named as the administrator of the diocese in the event of the death of Mar Abraham.<sup>48</sup>

The pope seems to have agreed to the second of these requests, and to have authorised the consecration of the archdeacon as bishop of Pālayur and as suffragan and successor to the archbishop. This consecration was, however, never carried out.<sup>49</sup>

These references to the archdeacon require some elucidation. The administration of the church of the Serra was different from that of the majority of the Christian churches. Since the bishop was always a foreigner, with no more than a somewhat rudimentary knowledge of the local language, it was essential that he should have the services of a competent administrator, familiar with Malayālam, and with all the customs of Hindus, Muslims, Jews and Christians. This person was the archdeacon. The Thomas Christians treated, and treat, their bishops with immense reverence. But the bishop was a somewhat remote figure, surrounded by an aura of majesty. The archdeacon was the one with whom the Christians had to do in all matters of practical relevance, and in all their relationships with the many non-Christian powers by which their lives were so largely conditioned. There were among the Thomas Christians two families of especial distinction, which, as was believed, had been endowed by the apostle Thomas himself with sacerdotal powers.<sup>50</sup> The archdeacon always belonged to the Pakalomaṛṅgam family. In earlier times he seems never to have aspired to the episcopal dignity, perhaps because in those days he was not required to abstain from marriage, whereas the rule of episcopal celibacy was strictly observed in the Chaldaean church. At the start the Portuguese were hardly aware of the importance of the archdeacon in all ecclesiastical affairs; experience was to teach them.

Mar Abraham was more favourable to the Jesuits than to the Portuguese secular clergy, and was glad to make use of them for the reformation of the churches in his diocese. Their great achievement was the foundation of a seminary at Vaippikkotta not far from Cranganore. After the death of Fr Vincent de Lagos in 1552 the old Franciscan seminary at Cranganore had languished, there being no one to carry it on with equal zeal and devotion. The Jesuit seminary soon began to attract students by the excellence both of its discipline and of the instruction given. Moreover it had been fortunate in securing the services of an able Father, who had realised the dangers implicit in the policy of extreme Latinisation pursued by others. Francis Roz, in addition to acquiring a good knowledge of Malayālam, had been to Mar Abraham to learn Syriac. In 1584, in face of considerable opposition from the Latinisers, he added a course in Syriac to the curriculum. The future students of the seminary were not to be wholly alienated from the traditions

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of their fathers. One of the teachers at the seminary was Fr Peter Luis, a Brahman convert from Quilon, who was later to become the first Indian member of the Society of Jesus.<sup>51</sup>

Apart from the presence of a rival Chaldaean bishop Mar Simon, who was supported by some of the Franciscans,<sup>52</sup> the Serra enjoyed for ten years a period of peaceful development, so much so that in 1583 it was possible to hold a diocesan synod. Two years later Mar Abraham had so far recovered confidence in the Portuguese as to feel able to attend the third Council of Goa. Here a further humiliation awaited him. On the ground that, in ordinations carried out by him, at the *porrectio instrumentorum* there had been no wine in the chalice handed to the newly ordained priest, the Roman authorities in Goa declared that all these ordinations were invalid.<sup>53</sup> Mar Abraham found it advisable to submit to this humiliation, on 24 November 1585 dutifully signed those decrees of the council which dealt with the affairs of the Serra, and on his return ordained all his priests for the third time.

In spite of this complaisance the closing years of Mar Abraham were not to be free from trouble. The accusations made against him by the Westerners may be summed up under four heads:<sup>54</sup>

The archbishop, at the council, had promised to revise the service books of the Thomas Christians and to purge them of all traces of Nestorian heresy; he has failed to take any steps to carry out this undertaking.

In 1590 he refused to ordain the candidates put forward by the Vaippikkotta seminary, presumably on the grounds that they had been too deeply Latinised to be acceptable in the churches of the Serra.

The archbishop is simoniacal and sells the sacraments. This charge, constantly repeated, rested on a misunderstanding. The Western church had provided a steady income for its clergy, usually in the form of manors for bishops, and glebe land for priests. The Eastern churches made no such provision, the clergy being dependent on occasional offerings made by the faithful, for the priests especially at marriage and for the bishop especially at ordination. Either system is susceptible of grave abuse; but each is an attempt to take seriously the injunction of St Paul that those who serve the Gospel are entitled to live of the Gospel.

When Mar Abraham prays for his patriarch, he refers to him as universal pastor and head of all Christians, titles which belong of right only to the bishop of Rome.

In the present state of research it is impossible to say how far these allegations were well founded. If they were true, they would undoubtedly, in the eyes of those brought up in the strict paths of Tridentine orthodoxy,

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constitute evidence that Mar Abraham had departed from the faith. The Thomas Christians might well have regarded them as no more than a legitimate protest made by an Eastern archbishop against attempts to change the order of an ancient Eastern church.

Old and weary, Mar Abraham died in February 1597.<sup>55</sup>

#### 6 MENEZES AND THE SYNOD OF DIAMPER

Mar Abraham before his death had appointed the archdeacon George as vicar general of the diocese. The new archbishop of Goa, Alexis de Menezes, tried to set this on one side and to appoint Francis Roz to the position. As it appeared that the reaction of the Thomas Christians to this proposal was likely to be violent, the archbishop found it prudent to give way and to accept the appointment of the archdeacon.<sup>56</sup> But George was so evasive, rejecting one after the other all the restrictions which the archbishop tried to impose upon him, that deep distrust grew up between the two men.

Alexis de Menezes, aristocratic, well connected and well educated, was only thirty-five years old, when in 1595 he was appointed to the dignity of archbishop of Goa and primate of the east.<sup>57</sup> From the point of view of the Portuguese a better choice could not have been made. The new archbishop was a man of considerable personal courage, endowed with charm and diplomatic skill, devout according to the strictest letter of Tridentine orthodoxy, and of an inflexible will.

Of one thing Menezes was absolutely certain – that his was the supreme ecclesiastical authority in the East, and that the Thomas Christians must be led to acknowledge that authority, to return to that unconditional obedience to the bishop of Rome from which they should never have departed, and to accept only such bishops as might be nominated by the pope to care for their spiritual welfare. The conjuncture of the times was propitious to the enterprise of Menezes. Since the death of Mar Abraham and the departure of Mar Simon, there was no one else in the Serra who could claim to be a legitimate bishop; and the Portuguese were keeping so careful a watch on the ports that it was very unlikely that any one pretending to the episcopal office would be able to slip through the net.

In other ways the moment was favourable. For once the civil and ecclesiastical authorities in the east were in agreement, and Menezes could count on support in all his actions both from the viceroy in Goa and from the captain of Cochin. The rājā of Cochin was at that time most anxious to avoid any friction with the Portuguese, and may have felt that it would be good to have the Portuguese on his side in the event of the Thomas Christians showing an inclination to assert an independence greater than that to which they had traditionally been entitled. Even among the Thomas Christians

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there were some who felt that the favour of the Portuguese was a matter of great moment. They were deeply involved in the traffic in pepper, and had been able to render considerable services to the Portuguese in the development of their share in it. If the Portuguese and the rājā of Cochin combined against them, they might find themselves cut off from their share in the trade, and this was a greater risk than they were prepared to run.

The archdeacon had made a profession of faith which seemed to be satisfactory, and had received from the archbishop appointment as vicar general of the Serra. But it was not long before events took place which cast a dubious light on his sincerity. It seems that the archdeacon was still hoping that a bishop might come from Mesopotamia to replace Mar Abraham.<sup>58</sup> He was said to have declared that the document sent by the archbishop conveyed to him no authority beyond that which he already had as archdeacon, and that the pope of Rome had no more to do with the apostolical church of St Thomas than the church of Thomas had to do with that of Rome. At this time there was a happening which, though trivial in itself, is none the less significant as indicating the depth of the feeling among the Thomas Christians against what they regarded as the Roman aggression. One of the pupils of the Vaippikkotta seminary, while saying his daily office in church, was overheard by some of the *cattanārs* praying for the pope before the patriarch of Babylon; the priests treated him very roughly, turned him out of the church, and

spoke also to his father to whip him out of praying for the pope, who they said was none of their prelates, nor had anything to do with them. The Archbishop being informed thereof wrote immediately to the Arch-Deacon, commanding him to make examples of those impudent Hereticks for what they had said and done to the Boy; which the Arch-Deacon was so far from doing that he Honoured those men for it.<sup>59</sup>

Clearly it was time for Menezes to carry out his projected visitation of the Serra – nothing but his personal presence could bring order into the situation. On 27 December 1598, disregarding the tears and warnings of those who tried to dissuade him from so perilous a venture, he set out from Goa, accompanied by a considerable retinue, and after a stay of sixteen days in Cannanore proceeded to Cochin, where he was splendidly received by the captain and the entire city.

From the start there were deep misunderstandings on both sides. The Thomas Christians regarded Menezes as a visitor whom it was their duty to receive with all friendship and courtesy, who should be permitted to celebrate mass in their churches, to preach to the people and to bless the congregation; but actions which implied jurisdiction, such as carrying out visitations, conferring orders, passing sentence of excommunication and

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revoking it, could not be permitted. Menezes regarded himself as having full rights of jurisdiction, and being entitled to do exactly those things which in the judgement of the Thomas Christians were excluded.

The archbishop spent four months in carrying out a visitation of the Serra in preparation for the synod which it was his intention to convene. At the start he found himself faced with a solid wall of hostility; by the end of that time he had succeeded in imposing his authority and in winning over to his side no small part of the leadership among the Thomas Christians.

Among the most notable of his successes was the reduction of the archdeacon to submission. Menezes had declared on several occasions his intention of excommunicating George and replacing him by a *cattanār* named Thomas Kurian, a near relation of George. Those present interceded on behalf of the archdeacon; he was a young man who had fallen into the hands of evil counsellors; let the archbishop be patient, and he could be brought back into the right way. Menezes drew up a long list of conditions to be observed by the archdeacon, among them the pledge not to recognise any bishop other than those sent by the pope, and to secure good attendance at the synod which was shortly to be held. At last the two men met at Vaippikkotta. The archbishop treated the penitent with the greatest kindness, assured him that the past should all be forgotten, and permitted him to make his submission to Rome in private.<sup>60</sup> All went off well; but the feeling remains that neither man reposed any confidence in the other; nor was there any reason why he should.

For two years the Thomas Christians had been without a bishop, and for a number of years before that they had hardly ever seen Mar Abraham. Menezes took every opportunity of appearing before them in the full splendour of Western episcopal array. He preached by interpretation long sermons, in which he set forth the object of his mission, the duty of total submission which they owed to the pope, and the blessings which would come to them through being again admitted to the full fellowship of the one true church of Christ. On Easter Day at Kaṭutturutti he celebrated in full the rites of the day, accompanied by the Fathers and the students of the seminary. The people were deeply impressed by the splendour of the occasion and by the devout reverence manifested by all the participants.

The records surviving from this period are extensive, but they are all written exclusively from the Portuguese point of view. Even such occasional letters as that sent by the archdeacon to the pope on 20 December 1601,<sup>61</sup> were clearly written by the Jesuits, and expressed rather what they felt should be said than what the alleged writer may actually have wished to say. Our chief authority, Antony Gouvea, seems, though his reliability has been questioned by some, to be an accurate and trustworthy recorder of events; but he too is a partisan in whose eyes Menezes can do no wrong. Only by



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reading between the lines of his careful narrative is it possible to detect something of what was passing in the minds of the Thomas Christians.

This is specially the case when we come to consider the most questionable of the actions of the archbishop. He announced that on the Saturday before Passion Sunday he would confer holy orders in the church at Udiyampērūr (Diamper) not far from Cochin.<sup>62</sup> At once the archdeacon was up in arms. He declared that this intention of the archbishop was contrary to the agreement reached between them that Menezes would perform no acts implying jurisdiction until after the conclusion of the synod which it had been agreed between them should be held. Menezes replied that that agreement was now out of date, and that he intended to exercise full jurisdiction according to the brief which he had received from his holiness the pope. The archdeacon then pleaded with him to ordain only Latins and not Syrians,<sup>63</sup> and that those whom he ordained should be sent to work only in the diocese of Cochin and not in the Serra. Menezes affirmed that he would ordain any whom he chose from either group, and that it was his express intention to bring to an end the separation between Latins and Syrians, and to bring all to a common obedience to the one pastor of the universal church.<sup>64</sup>

The actions of Menezes were not lacking in shrewdness. He had noted the deep devotion felt by the *cattanārs* for the bishop who had ordained them. For a number of years there had been no ordinations, since Mar Abraham had refused to ordain students trained by the Jesuits, and from the time of his death there had been no bishop in the Serra. Menezes was aware that there were in the Serra a number of young men who desired to be ordained; by ordaining them he would attach them to himself by bonds of special devotion, and would thus assure himself of a strong party in his favour at the forthcoming synod. Ordination fees had been one of the main sources of income for the Syrian bishops; by remitting the fees and thus making possible the ordination of poorer students, Menezes would place many of the new *cattanārs* under special obligations to himself.

The manner in which Menezes acted must be held to have been both dishonest and high-handed. He repudiated a pledge which he had undoubtedly given. And he was anticipating the decisions of a synod, to be convened largely in order to determine the limits of the authority which might be exercised by a Western bishop over an Eastern church.

Objections notwithstanding, on the appointed day the candidates to the number of thirty-eight were drawn up before Menezes, and examined as to their character and morals and also as to the adequacy of their knowledge of Syriac.<sup>65</sup> Having made a comprehensive renunciation of the patriarch of Babylon and an act of comprehensive submission to the bishop of Rome, all the candidates were then ordained.

This was not the only occasion on which Menezes conferred holy orders.

Following up the success of his first venture, he gave notice throughout the Serra that he would hold an ordination service in the church at Paravūr on the fourth Sunday after Trinity.<sup>66</sup> No less than fifty candidates appeared, and after having made the usual renunciations and submissions were admitted to holy orders. Gouvea adds pointedly that 'these, together with those who had been ordained on other occasions,<sup>67</sup> constituted a goodly number on whom he could confidently count that they would be on his side, with their parents and other relations, in all that concerned the synod'.<sup>68</sup> Other *cattanārs* were also drawn into the official party by favours and kindnesses which Menezes had shown to them.

Brief mention should be made of two other methods used by Menezes to establish his hold on the minds of the Thomas Christians.

Wherever he went on his visitations, he was sedulous in his care for the sick and the afflicted, visiting them in their homes and providing for their needs by generous alms. The Christians could not but contrast his ways with those of their former Syrian bishops, who were accustomed to receive from the faithful rather than to give. They failed to note that Menezes had at his disposal the lavish funds provided by the king, which made him not only the third man in standing but also one of the richest men in the *Estado*.<sup>69</sup>

This gentleness towards the Christians was matched by asperity towards the officials of the local rulers, to whom Menezes used such language as no other Christian would have dared to use. He was prepared to stand up to the princes themselves. In one letter he ventured to remind the rājā of Cochin that 'when our people entered upon friendship with the rājās of Cochin, they were very poor and insignificant princelings of Malabar, whereas today the Portuguese have enriched them and have added to their power'. Naturally the Christians were impressed by this kind of conduct. They seem to have concluded that, if they had as their bishop or prelate a Portuguese, they would be held in greater esteem by the non-Christians, and would not be troubled or tyrannised over by their arbitrary rājās.<sup>70</sup>

All preparations having now been made, the next step was to hold the long-promised synod. The archbishop rejected the proposal that the synod should be held at Ankamāli, the ancient centre of the diocese, and fixed upon Diamper, mainly because of the propinquity of the Portuguese garrison on the help of which he would be able to count in the event of any disorder. On 11 May 1599 both the archbishop and the archdeacon sent out documents, summoning all the *cattanārs* and four representatives from each parish to be present at Diamper on the day appointed for the opening of the synod, 20 June 1599.<sup>71</sup> This done, Menezes together with his attendants withdrew to the seminary at Vaippikkotta, and spent four weeks in the arduous labour of drawing up in Portuguese the decrees which were to be passed by the synod, and securing the translation of them into Malayālam. The acts and decrees

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of the synod fill more than three hundred pages in the English translation made by Michael Geddes; from this it is possible to judge the speed and vigour with which Menezes and his assistants carried out their task.

On the appointed day *cattanārs* to the number of 153,<sup>72</sup> and lay representatives to the number of 650,<sup>73</sup> were gathered together in Diamper. With them were assembled the entire chapter of the cathedral of Cochin, the Portuguese captain Antony de Noronha, a man much esteemed by Christians and non-Christians alike, many of the civic authorities of the city, and a number of others who had come out of curiosity to see what was going on. The local rulers, suspicious that, whatever might be said, the real aim of the meeting was to withdraw the Christians from their due and natural allegiance, had their spies everywhere.

Menezes was concerned that everything that was done at the synod should be understood by all, in order that none should have the opportunity to say afterwards that he had been tricked into accepting what he had not understood. Therefore, before any business was transacted, he insisted that a competent interpreter must be chosen. The choice fell upon a *cattanār*, Jacob, who was well skilled in both languages, with, to help him 'and in case he was at any time at fault, to correct him', Francis Roz SJ and Antony Toscana SJ. The archbishop then celebrated solemn pontifical mass *ad tollendum schisma*, and Francis Roz preached to the great edification of all present. One important decree was passed on this first day, forbidding all on pain of excommunication to assemble in any kind of *Juntoes* (Geddes), small meetings, to discuss any matters relating to the synod, without express permission from the archbishop, a prohibition which it proved impossible to enforce.

The second day was entirely taken up with receiving from the participants the profession and declaration of the faith. The profession and oath<sup>74</sup> had been drawn up in extended form, to lay stress upon those articles of the Tridentine faith which had previously been unknown to the Thomas Christians, and to repudiate all Nestorian error and in particular all allegiance to the patriarch of Babylon, 'whom I condemn, reject and anathematize as being a Nestorian heretic and schismatic, and out of the obedience of the holy Roman church, and for that reason out of a state of salvation'. Such professions of faith were unfamiliar and disagreeable to many of those present. To quiet their minds, Menezes himself put off his mitre, and kneeling before the altar made the whole profession in a loud voice. Even so there was much murmuring among the people. They had always been Christians; why should they now make professions of the faith as though previously they had not had it? When the archdeacon followed the example of Menezes, the opposition was stilled and others were prepared to do the same. The proceedings took no less than seven hours, during the

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whole of which Menezes sat robed upon his throne. On that day no other business was carried through.

The third day should have been given to questions of faith. But at the request of the Thomas Christians these were postponed till the feast of John the Baptist (24 June), when it was known that no Portuguese would be present, and the arraignment of Nestorian doctrines could be carried out in a private session of the synod. The amount of work to be got through was immense; it was therefore agreed that sessions should be held every day from seven till eleven in the morning, and from two till six in the afternoon. More discussion and questioning was allowed than from the authoritarian temper of Menezes might have been expected. But steps were taken to quell such opposition as was threatened, and to meet argument by counter-argument. Six elderly *cattanārs* had been chosen as counsellors, and to them everything was explained in advance of the sessions.

The fourth day was spent in closed session to which no Portuguese were admitted. Morning, afternoon, and through a large part of the night the sessions continued, in accordance with the request of the Thomas Christians that everything relating to major issues of doctrine should be concluded on that one day. It was decided that certain books should be burned and others purged of errors and corrected, and that major changes should be introduced in the services for Advent and Christmas Day which were found to be gravely affected by Nestorian ways of thinking.

So the days passed in this tedious and exacting labour. The number and variety of the decrees passed indicates the extent of the knowledge which the archbishop had acquired of all the affairs of the church of the Serra. He saw his role as that of the judge – *cuncta stricte discussurus* – nothing was too small to attract his attention, and no error must be allowed to persist in any nook or cranny.<sup>75</sup> One principle ruled all his actions – everything must be reduced to the most exact conformity with Rome and the Roman ways; Trent had spoken, and the words of Trent are the direct expression of the divine wisdom. From now on *cattanārs* must be unmarried. All the seven sacraments must be accepted, and superstitious usages must be given up. The one exception was in the field of liturgy. By now Menezes had realised the intense affection felt by the Thomas Christians for the Syriac language and the Eastern rites. They should be allowed to keep their own liturgy, but the rite should be purged of everything that was unacceptable by Tridentine standards.

Much of what was achieved at the synod was good. For instance, the division of the whole area of the Serra into parishes was clearly a sensible measure. There had been great laxity in administration and in practice. Isolated as they had been for centuries from all other Christians and living in the midst of a far more numerous Hindu population, the Thomas Christians had inevitably been influenced by their non-Christian neighbours and had

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come to include among their customs elements which could not easily be reconciled with Christian faith. For instance, Christians had adopted from the Hindus the practice of ordeals, such as touching a red-hot iron, putting the hand in boiling oil, or swimming across a river infested with crocodiles. Such practices were forbidden by decree no. 257. Many of the reforms introduced by the synod were desirable. But the ruthlessness of Menezes in his handling of this ancient and venerable church, and the rigidity with which he excluded everything that did not exactly conform to Roman usage, can hardly be commended, and were in fact likely to prove counter-productive.<sup>76</sup>

When all was done, a final opportunity was given for those who had doubts or objections to raise them. Some difficulties were raised and dealt with. Then followed the signing of the decrees. Naturally the archbishop signed first, and then the archdeacon, followed by the priests and deacons, and then by the lay people in order due, each declaring that he had accepted the decrees without compulsion and of his own free-will. When all was done, the archbishop fell on his knees and began to intone the canticle *Te Deum Laudamus* with great joy. Then all formed themselves up for a solemn procession, in front the people singing songs in Malayalam, then the *cattanārs* chanting in Syriac, finally the priests who had come with Menezes or who had come over from Cochin singing hymns and psalms in Latin, so that, as Gouvea phrases it, God who is Three in One was exalted and praised in three languages, Malayalam and Syriac and Latin, without confusion, by one people, united and fashioned in the unity of faith, hope and charity.

One adverse circumstance threatened to mar the joy of the proceedings. This was monsoon time. The sky was black with clouds, with storm and tempest, and so heavy a rain was falling that it seemed impossible that the cross-bearer should take even a single step outside the church. To some this presented itself as a clear sign of the disapproval of God – God was approving the old ways and passing judgement on the new. Menezes knew well what was passing in the minds of the people and was determined that the procession must go forward, with whatever danger to copes and to tempers. Twice he cried out in a voice of thunder that the cross must move. He was obeyed. As the cross-bearer stepped out of the church, the rain stopped, the clouds disappeared and the sky was as clear as though it had never rained. Luck had been with Menezes all through, and it remained with him to the last.

After the end of the synod Menezes remained in the Serra for a further six months to complete the visitation which he had begun earlier in the year. This involved him in very great labour. The nature of his proceedings has been admirably summarised by W. Germann:

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The proceedings in all the visitations was the same – announcement of his arrival, a solemn entry, procession from the point at which he had alighted to the church, pronouncement of the blessing and dispensations, collection of books in Syriac and the surrender of books too heretical to be corrected in order that they might be burned, checking of baptisms and as it appears [conditional] repetition of baptism in a great many cases, invitations to those dwelling in remote places to come to the beloved *Nerchai*, the primitive love-feast of the Christians, and in consequence a gathering of the entire Christian population, absolution for those who had been excommunicated.<sup>77</sup>

The decrees of the synod were communicated, and the *cattanārs* encouraged to make sure that they were carried out in every detail.

Menezes, before he returned to Goa, had still to deal with two all-important matters – he must provide the people with a liturgy, and he must provide them with a bishop.

Over a long period it was generally believed that Menezes had so completely uprooted the ancient customs of the people that it was no longer possible to say what their liturgy had been before the synod of Diamper. But the careful researches of Dom R.H. Connolly have made it clear that the changes were less extensive than had been supposed. The church had used the Eastern liturgy of Addai and Mari; no change was made in the general structure of this service. This liturgy was unique among the liturgies of the world in not including the words of institution pronounced by the Lord at the last supper.<sup>78</sup> These were supplied from the Roman rite. The Nicene creed was westernised by the inclusion of the *filioque*. The commemoration of those whom the Roman church regarded as heretics was naturally removed, and the names replaced by those more acceptable in Roman eyes. But a great many purely Eastern features were retained, and the people would have no difficulty in recognising this as their own service, especially as the Syriac language had been retained.<sup>79</sup>

Menezes was determined that no bishop should ever again be allowed to come to the Serra from Mesopotamia or from the patriarch of Babylon. The bishop must be a Latin. But he was aware of a strong feeling among the people that the new bishop should not be a Jesuit and should not be a Portuguese. The people, when first asked for their opinion, said that they would rather have Menezes himself than anyone else – a notable tribute to the hold that he had gained on their affections. He replied that he would be willing to resign the archbishopric of Goa and come to serve them, provided that the pope was willing to set him free. He must have known that this was unlikely, and in fact he had already chosen his man. On 20 December 1599, on the motion of Cardinal Gesualdo,<sup>80</sup> the name of Francis Roz was put forward in Rome for appointment to the bishopric of Ankamāli.<sup>81</sup> Menezes must have written to Rome not later than February 1599, that is just at the

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time at which he was *beginning* his visitation, in order that the letter might be sent with the Portuguese fleet which would sail in that month. Roz was a Jesuit and this might be held against him. But he was a Catalan and not a Portuguese. Moreover he was well known to the people of the Serra and had a good knowledge of both Syriac and Malayālam. If a Latin bishop was to be appointed to this Eastern church, it is probable that no better choice could have been made.<sup>82</sup>

In view of the distance and the lack of bishops in India, the pope was pleased to waive the rule that three bishops must take part in an episcopal consecration, and to agree that Roz 'may receive consecration from any bishop of his choice in communion with the apostolic see, in the presence of three or at least two dignitaries of the see of Ankamāli, or if they are lacking, canons of the same see'.<sup>83</sup> In accordance with this permission but by his own account unwillingly, Francis Roz SJ was raised to the episcopate by Menezes in Goa on 25 January 1601.<sup>84</sup>

One grave error had been made. The bishop in the Serra had always been a metropolitan, subject to the patriarch of Babylon but not to any other bishop. Now it had been decided in Rome that Ankamāli was to be reduced to the status of a bishopric, and like Cochin was to be a suffragan bishopric of Goa. This could not but be resented by the Thomas Christians. Whatever advantages there might be in union with Rome, these had been purchased at too high a price if they involved the degradation of their archbishopric from its previous distinction. And too close a connection with Goa was the very thing that they wished to avoid. From the beginning the scales were weighted against Francis Roz.

At this point we take leave of a remarkable man.<sup>85</sup> All the faults of Alexis de Menezes have become plain in the story recounted in this chapter. He was imperious and high-handed; he was arrogant and could be brutal; when once he had made up his mind what had to be done, nothing could deflect him from his purpose. Among the servants of Portugal in India only Affonso de Albuquerque takes rank with him as the man who knew how to get things done. India was not the end of his story. In 1610 he was recalled to Portugal<sup>86</sup> and appointed bishop of Braga and primate of Portugal. He held office also as viceroy of Portugal, and president of the council of the state of Portugal in Madrid.<sup>87</sup> When he died he was only fifty-eight years old.<sup>88</sup>

## 7 CONTROVERSY ABOUT THE SYNOD

The synod of Diamper raises a number of difficult questions which, though they belong to the field of canon law rather than that of history, cannot be entirely disregarded by the historian.

Almost all students of the period, even conservative scholars such as E.

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Tisserant,<sup>89</sup> agree that Menezes acted in a high-handed and intolerant manner in changing so radically the customs of an ancient Eastern church, just at the time at which Rome was beginning to adopt a more complaisant policy in relation to such bodies as the Maronite church in the Levant. Menezes certainly held that he had authority to act as he did. But the question has been raised as to whether he had in point of fact any such authority, and whether the decrees of the synod of Diamper have any validity from the point of view of canon law. On this question the dispute is hot and active at the present time.<sup>90</sup>

The problems involved can be summarised under four headings:

Was the synod legitimately convoked?

Was it correctly conducted?

Was it approved by competent authority?

To what extent, if any, has later custom modified the legal aspect of the synod?

The first question may be rather differently stated: Had Menezes authority to convene and conduct such a synod in the diocese of the Serra? In support of his claim to do so Menezes referred to two briefs issued by the pope on, respectively, 27 January 1595 and 21 January 1597. These deal primarily with the question of Mar Abraham, and the appointment of a vicar general in the event of his death.<sup>91</sup> It is clear that the pope recognises the metropolitical authority of Goa over the Serra and has no doubt of his own right to appoint a successor to Mar Abraham. But did this confer on Menezes the right to hold a diocesan synod, as the synod of Diamper undoubtedly was, and to interfere in the detailed administration of the diocese during the vacancy of the See? The general view of the canonists seems to be that it did not.

If Menezes had the authority to hold a synod, there was little to object to in the manner of convening it. Summonses in proper form had been sent out both by the archbishop and the archdeacon. As this was an Eastern synod, no objection could rightly be taken to the presence of lay delegates with voting rights.

When we come to the question of the manner in which the synod was conducted, difficulties loom very much larger. In fact our authorities directly contradict one another. Gouvea, whom we have mainly followed in the account given above, gives the impression that great care was taken to make sure that the delegates understood what was going on and that their consent was freely given. Other contemporary authorities present a very different picture.

In a letter to Rome dated 20 November 1603, Francis Roz writes as follows:



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For to tell you the entire truth, some of the canons of the above-mentioned synod were added by the archbishop himself after the synod had ended. Not a single canon was discussed or altered . . . They heard them without understanding what was being said, as I can myself bear ample witness, as also can the other Fathers who understand the language. His Excellency said many a time that the synod was intended merely to show them the way of their salvation without obstacle.<sup>92</sup>

Furthermore Roz distinctly contradicts what Gouvea had said about the provision of interpreters. He states that the decrees were read in Portuguese, and that in consequence no one understood what was being said. He adds that the Malayālam text was much shorter than the Portuguese.<sup>93</sup>

Roz can hardly have been mistaken. His report, if it is accepted, casts a sinister light on the proceedings of Menezes. The fact of the matter is that Menezes was attempting the impossible. Many of the points under discussion related to complicated questions of technical theology. To express these in Malayālam would have been extremely difficult; to make sure that simple people gathered from a hundred villages would be able to understand them all was beyond all the devices of communication at that time available to man. If, as seems possible, the aim of Menezes was that people should consent rather than that they should understand, he may not have been too much concerned about the lack of communication.

The extent to which the Acts of the synod of Diamper received higher approval is not clear.<sup>94</sup> It seems that Menezes gave up the idea of securing formal approval from the Holy See.<sup>95</sup> But the pope's letter of congratulation to Menezes on the work that had been done and the publication of the *Jornada* of Gouvea may have been held to constitute *de facto* the necessary confirmation. In any case, as the synod was a diocesan synod and not a provincial council, approval by a higher authority was not strictly necessary.<sup>96</sup>

All this, however, is of no more than technical interest. The synod of Diamper had taken place and its effects remained. Its Acts were taken as the charter for the new age of the Thomas Christians. Menezes believed that he had brought peace, order and unity to the ancient church. But force has a way of rebounding on itself. What he had actually done was to sow the seeds of dissensions and divisions – divisions which up to the time of writing have not been healed.<sup>97</sup>

## 10 · Lights and Shadows

### I CHRISTIAN CHARITY IN ACTION

The charge has often been made that Portuguese missions were vitiated from the start by efforts to coerce people into abandoning their old faith and accepting the new. The charge can be substantiated or repudiated only on the basis of a careful study of the methods actually used by the Portuguese over a period of time for winning converts to the faith and for building up an Indian church.

We have earlier taken note of the *Misericordia* of Goa as one of the notable works of charity maintained in that city. This was directed only to the needs of the Portuguese, and had no specific function as an evangelistic operation. Yet we have the record of at least one Brāhman converted as a consequence of the good work that he had seen carried on there. This man had been in the employ of the *Misericordia*, and carried on its business and wrote its documents with as much credit and authority as if he had been one of the brethren. He affirmed that there were two causes of his conversion; first, seeing the works of charity which the Christians carried on among themselves with so much love and diligence; second, the reading of spiritual books, which had shewn him the truth and purity of the Christian religion and the ignorance and falsehoods in which the Hindus lived ensnared.<sup>1</sup>

Among the Christians deeply engaged in this and other works of mercy we have noted the name of Cosme Anes. We have a touching account of the death of this good man in a letter of Br Luis Fróis dated 1 December 1560:

In this year died in the college Cosme Anes, . . . a founder of this house and a great supporter of it. When he knew that his death was approaching, he requested the Fr Provincial to permit him to experience his passing away here among the brethren, in order that he might be helped by them with their prayers and sacrifices. He was received and welcomed by all with such religious charity and love as he had deserved, and as the brethren observed towards him, carrying out for him such rites and offices as it is customary to carry out for those who are actually members of the society.<sup>2</sup>

Other charitable works were carried on for the benefit of Goanese Christians, and also of the non-Christians.

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One of the Jesuits, who was also a surgeon, has left us a vivid account of his daily routine and of the ceaseless labours in which he was engaged.<sup>3</sup> From a rather later date (1563) we have a report that in one year seventy persons have become Christians as a result of the ministrations of the hospital.<sup>4</sup>

Among the good works regularly recognised at that time was that of visiting the gaols, conditions in which were described as terrible, and the galleys, places of terror, and accompanying to the scaffold those condemned to death. In a number of cases baptism was administered actually on the scaffold, one man declaring that he wished to die in the faith of the Christians, because he believed it to be the true law in which men are saved, and he desired that after his death his wife and children would also accept the faith.<sup>5</sup>

One method of evangelisation was that of public lectures, in itself perfectly justifiable except for a certain element of coercion, since the Brāhmins were required to attend the lectures on Sunday afternoons, just as the Jews in Browning's *Holy Cross Day* were required in Rome to attend Christian sermons on certain days of the year. In the account of the year 1559 we are told that the Dominican Fr Gonçalo took the lead, and was later followed by Fr Francis Rodriguez of the Jesuits, with Andrew Vaz, a Goanese Christian, as interpreter. At first the Hindus answered with frivolous and insignificant reasons; but later admitted that they were not learned men, and that their scholars were to be found in the kingdom of Vijayanagar. In the end, however, the majority of the Brāhmins affirmed that they would die in their own religion, which was also that of their fathers.<sup>6</sup>

More effective, probably, than these occasional utterances was the steady teaching, given by the pupils of the college of St Paul in Goa and the surrounding villages. These boys used to accompany the Fathers on their rounds, and made up by their knowledge of the language and of the customs of the people for the ignorance of the Fathers, none of whom could as yet speak an Indian language well.

The schools afforded an even better opportunity for patient and regular instruction. Nicolas Lancilotto, who was always inclined to take a pessimistic view of the situation, writes from Quilon, in a letter of 29 October 1552, of his pupils:

I work extremely hard to explain to them, by natural reasons and by comparisons and by clear examples, that the rites and customs of the heathen are all vanities and lies and deceits invented by evil men, and that they are all contrary to God, to natural law and reason . . . The people of this land have intelligence equal to ours, and are as capable as we are of learning and understanding, and for this reason I am certain that (if proper methods are adopted) a very great Christian church can come into being in these parts.<sup>7</sup>

### *Lights and Shadows*

It can be taken for granted that, when converts came in crowds to be baptised, many of them knew very little about what they were doing, and that their intentions, however sincere, could not be matched by any great depth of conviction in their faith. Yet this was far from being always the case, even when many came together for baptism. There are, in addition, records of a number of cases of individual conversion in which there is no reason to doubt the sincerity of the one who was asking for baptism.

One such baptism of exceptional note took place in Goa on 15 August 1557, and attracted perhaps more attention than any other.<sup>8</sup>

Among the residents of Goa at that time was Malle Adil Shāh, known to the Portuguese as Meale Khān, the eldest son and natural successor of Ismāil Adil Khān. Having become involved in the endless quarrels of the local rulers the prince had come to Goa, and was there held by successive governors, with a comfortable pension from the Portuguese government but without opportunity to return to his own country. This man had two sons and one daughter. The girl, as Muslim custom requires, was kept in strict seclusion, but was able to beguile the tedium of her days by listening at the window to the Christian songs sung by the choirboys of the college as they went to and fro on their way between home and school. Hearing the songs again and again, the princess became deeply interested in the Christian faith, an interest strengthened by a more or less clandestine friendship with a noble Portuguese lady, Maria Toscana, the wife of Xavier's firm friend Diogo Pereira. Gradually she became possessed of an intense desire to become a Christian, but was afraid to inform her parents of her desire for fear that they might kill her rather than endure the disgrace of losing a daughter from the faith.

A plan was therefore made to remove her from her father's house and make the baptism possible. On St Lawrence's day, 11 August, while the governor engaged the girl's father in conversation, Doña Maria with some other ladies slipped into the house and up the staircase to the place where the girl was waiting ready to descend another staircase and to escape from the house by a small backdoor. But the girl's mother, realising what was afoot, caught hold of the girl and engaged in what can only be called a free-for-all with the Portuguese ladies. Only the intervention of the governor made it possible to get her into the street, where a splendid palanquin was waiting to take her away. She was lodged in the house of Diogo Pereira and treated with all the honour due to a princess.

The baptism was fixed for the feast of the Assumption, 15 August. The governor and the patriarch of Ethiopia stood as sponsors, Doña Maria and other Portuguese ladies being the godmothers. The patriarch himself carried out the baptism and gave the convert the name Mary in honour of

### *The Portuguese Authorities Intervene*

the day on which she was baptised. This was the first occasion on which a Muslim lady of such consequence had been baptised in Goa. In order that she might be maintained in the state befitting her rank, the governor assigned to her an annual income of a thousand *pardãos*, a grant which was later confirmed by the king.<sup>9</sup>

Baptisms were commonly made an occasion of great festivity, for the great consolation and fervour of the Christians and the greater confusion of the Brāhmans and the Hindus.<sup>10</sup> Of one such baptism we are told that the governor with the Fathers and brothers of the college and a large part of the population, went in procession; as the children moved through the streets, they sang psalms and hymns to the sound of many instruments – flutes, trumpets and drums, which the governor had ordered to be present. The governor accepted some of the candidates as his godchildren, as did every other member of the gentry. When the baptism was ended, the newly baptised together with many others, all with lighted candles in their hands, went round the courtyard of the college, happy and contented as people who had recovered their primitive innocence.<sup>11</sup>

#### 2 THE PORTUGUESE AUTHORITIES INTERVENE

The king of Portugal took seriously his obligations as the chief supporter of the Christian cause in the East, and constantly impressed on his officials the importance of lending their aid to the Christian propaganda. The extent to which his good intentions were carried into effect depended very much on the attitude of the successive governors and the relations they established with the Christian forces.

Interesting character sketches of a number of governors have been gathered by a modern author from the chroniclers of the time. Of Francis Barreto (1555–8) we are told that ‘this courtier was throughout a great person, and the kings always availed themselves of him for great enterprises’. Constantine de Bragança (1558–61) was ‘a man of medium stature, short, broad-shouldered, bearded, well bred, mild, affable, a great promoter of the cause of religion, a great friend of justice, truthful, chaste, at least always so careful as never to give reason for scandal’. Francis de Coutinho, count of Redondo (1561–4), was ‘a person well fitted for the post of viceroy of India, by reason of his many qualities of foresight, prudence and determination, of all of which he had given abundant proof over a long period’. Antony de Noronha (1564–8) was ‘a courtier of great discernment, capacity of government and prudence . . . the residents received him with real joy, for he was very much liked by them, as they were aware of his ability and qualities, and therefore expected very good government’.<sup>12</sup> De

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Coutinho was the governor of whom the Jesuits least approved; and de Bragança was the one who more than others had gained their favour as having a real enthusiasm for what they were doing.<sup>13</sup>

Even before the beginning of the period with which we are now dealing, there was a feeling abroad that too much pressure to become Christians was being exercised on the population by the royal officials. In a remarkable letter addressed to the king by a learned Hindu, Azu Naik, in the year 1549, there is a serious warning of the dangers of haste and of the reactions to which it could give rise: 'Your highness should not want to have everything accomplished in a single hour. For in Rome where the Holy Father is, he permits all kinds of people to live, and he does not send them away if they do not want to become Christians. Since this is so, why should they act in Goa as they do?'<sup>14</sup>

After the middle of the century the shadows begin to darken. We are entering on the period of the 'Rigour of Mercy'.<sup>15</sup> The Rigour worked in two ways. So many privileges were granted to Christians that the Christian fold might seem to be a very pleasant place to be. And life might be made so unpleasant to those who chose to remain outside that to come in might seem to be the easier choice. It may truly be claimed that the maxim of the parable 'compel them to come in' was never fully applied; but there are many means of effective persuasion short of actual compulsion.

Changes in policy in India usually reflected changes of attitude and policy in Europe. The second half of the sixteenth century was far less tolerant than the first. This is reflected in the attitude of the younger members of the society who came out after 1552. Even the Jesuits complain at times of their intolerance. For instance, in the report for 1566 we read:

there are, specially among recent arrivals from the kingdom, some who indeed possess zeal but not according to knowledge. For no sooner do they see these Christians depart just a little from the customs of Spain than they think all this is a question of Hindu religion and idolatry. They do not know how to distinguish between that which is simply a religious emblem, and Hindu belief, and the custom of the land or region; with the result that the people are offended, which is a thing to be avoided.<sup>16</sup>

That the people were feeling increasingly the weight of Jesuit oppression comes out clearly in the account of what happened at Carambolim in 1560. Seeing that so many people were becoming Christians, the leaders gathered together to consider what action should be taken. One advised that the best course would be to leave the island and to go to dwell on the mainland, where they could live according to their own religion, 'for I judge it better to lose our possessions than our souls'.<sup>17</sup> Another countered this by saying that the present vigour of Jesuit propaganda would last only as long as the

### *The Portuguese Authorities Intervene*

term of the viceroy in power, and would cease with his return to Portugal; it would, therefore be better to remain and to hold on as best they could in Goa. A third expressed himself in the following terms:

It does not seem to me that there is anything to be gained by calculating when the present viceroy Don Constantine will leave for Portugal; you should rather ask when the Fathers of the Society of Jesus will go away. And, as it is clear that they will never go away, and will never cease to make Christians, and will achieve the same success with any other viceroy as they have with this one, let us commit ourselves to God and agree to become Christians.

Moved by this eloquence fourteen of the leaders of the community agreed to become Christians and presented themselves to the Fathers with this in view.<sup>18</sup>

A long list can be made of the privileges accorded to Christians, and particularly to converts, by Portuguese law in Goa.<sup>19</sup> A few examples may be given.

A decree of 22 September 1570 lays it down that Hindus who become Christians should be exempted from land-tax (*dizimos*) for fifteen years.

Slaves of Hindus who became Christians were to be set free (decree of 3 November 1572).

Alterations were made in the laws of inheritance, so that widows and daughters of Hindus, who under Hindu law would have had no claim to inheritance, should inherit, if they had become Christians.

A decree of 1562 lays it down that any Hindu wife who becomes a Christian, and who does not wish to live with her husband and separates from him on the ground that he continues to live as an unbeliever, shall have a right to all the ornaments and personal clothes which are in her possession at the time of her conversion, as well as one half of her husband's estate, movable or immovable, acquired after the date of her marriage.<sup>20</sup>

The Portuguese were dependent on Brāhmins for the carrying out of many functions in the administration, and some of these, such as the well-known Krishna and his son Dādaji, acquired great influence in the community. Kings of Portugal, who were not familiar with the local conditions, tried again and again to eliminate what seemed to them an abuse. A lengthy decree of King John, dated 25 June 1557, requires that

no officials of mine . . . should utilise the services in any way whatsoever of any Brahman or other infidel [Hindu] in matters of his office . . . I hereby order that from now onwards they should not serve in those offices, and that such offices should not be given them, and that all the offices which it is customary to give to the natives of the land should be given to the Christians and not to the Hindus, as stated above.

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Many of the Portuguese protested against these rules – the number of Christians qualified to hold such positions was quite inadequate; if the rules were strictly put into effect, both government and industry would collapse. Nevertheless they were reiterated in 1582 and 1591.

The law which caused the bitterest resentment amongst the Hindus was that relating to the handing over of Hindu orphans with a view to Christian instruction and baptism. The decree of 23 March 1559 orders that, if Hindu infants are left without near kin and are not of an age at which they have understanding and judgement, the Judge of Orphans is to see that they are handed over to the Fathers of the college of St Paul to be baptised, educated and indoctrinated by the Fathers, and are to be placed by them in positions according to their respective aptitudes and abilities.<sup>21</sup>

There were many complaints that children were taken away by force, when there were surviving relations prepared to take responsibility for them. Hindu families, concerned to evade the possibility of such abuses, were found to be sending orphan children into the non-Christian area of the mainland. The second Council of Goa, held in 1575, sought to bring order into the situation:

The Council petitions his highness to make a law to the effect that, as soon as a Hindu father dies, the Judge of Orphans should take the orphan children, not with a view to baptizing them before the age of discretion, except in cases in which the law and learned men allow it, but with a view to bringing them up well and giving them a good education in our lands, free from the dangers in which the mothers might place them.<sup>22</sup>

Increasingly severe laws were passed against the practice of Hindu rites and ceremonies. Previously, only public celebrations of idolatrous rites had been forbidden; now it seemed that search into Hindu houses, in which it was suspected that such rites were being carried out, was to be permitted, and that even possession of idols was to be regarded as a crime. In 1559 various pieces of legislation were codified by the court, and the code now included the following regulations:

All existing images are to be destroyed and no new ones are to be made.

No Hindu feasts are to be celebrated in public.

Hindu preachers and teachers are forbidden access to the island of Goa.

The *Holi* festival is banned.<sup>23</sup>

*Sati*, the burning of Hindu widows is forbidden. If the presence of images is suspected, the chief justice is to be informed. If the charge is proved, the guilty party is to be condemned to the galleys for life, half of his property to go to the informer and half to the church.<sup>24</sup>

That these were no empty threats is clearly shown in a letter of Peter de



### *The Portuguese Authorities Intervene*

Almeida SJ written from Goa on 26 December 1558, in which he describes various raids on Hindu houses, where it was thought that Hindu rites were being carried out. In one he and his companions found in progress a festival in honour of Ganessa, Vinachoti and Vinaico (Ganesa, Vighna-nāshakar, Vināyaka); one tried to escape but was pursued, captured and presented before the vicar general; he was sentenced to life-service in the galleys with the loss of all his property. In another house were found three images called Śālagrāma. Later going to the house of a well-known sorcerer they found eleven or twelve images of diverse materials – stone, copper, brass. In this case also the man was condemned to the galleys for life; his wife and children were offered acquittal, provided that they became Christians and did not persist in their evil ways.<sup>25</sup>

Most serious of all the steps taken against the Hindus was the actual expulsion of a number of Brāhmins, whose presence was judged harmful to the well-being of the state. On 2 April 1560 the pious viceroy Constantine de Bragança issued an order that a number of Brāhmins, whose names were included in the rolls appended to the order, should leave the island of Goa and the possessions of the king of Portugal. There was no confiscation of property; those sentenced to expulsion were given a month in which to dispose of their possessions.<sup>26</sup> The impression is given that this was a wholesale expulsion. Yet we learn from a letter of Luis Fróis of 1 December 1560 that only thirty persons had been expelled, of whom one had later returned and asked for baptism.<sup>27</sup> In a later form of the order (1563), all who tilled the fields with their own hands – physicians, carpenters, blacksmiths, shopkeepers and collectors of the royal revenue – are exempted from the order of expulsion.

The various measures taken by the state against the Hindus had produced a kind of panic; a great many inhabitants of Goa, apart from those expelled by authority, had voluntarily crossed the waters and settled in areas where they could live after the manner of their fathers. The next viceroy, Francis Coutinho, complains bitterly of the devastation which he found – Goa and the other islands were much depopulated, the villages deserted, and fields overflowed by the waters of the rivers. Accordingly he gave order on 5 December 1561 that 'having regard to the great harm which I saw had resulted . . . to the interest of my king and the welfare of this land . . . I hereby order that any infidel [Hindu] who may return should be handed over his estate and that he should hold and possess the same as before.'<sup>28</sup>

Naturally the high-handed methods of the Jesuits and others met with criticism; the harshest critic was found within the Jesuit order itself. Antony de Heredia came to India in 1551, returned to Portugal in 1561, and was expelled from the society in the following year. During the crucial years 1558 to 1560 he was in Goa. He was less than cautious in his use of language:

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With regard to the propagation of Christianity, the manner of it was so outrageous that it could not but cause scandal throughout the whole of India . . . We claimed that we did not force our religion on anyone. But in practice they saw us forcing our religion on the inhabitants of our territories, after we had stated, and made an agreement with them, that they would be allowed to live without constraint and in peace.<sup>29</sup>

Heredia accuses the Jesuits of using most improper methods to force people to become Christians, and of using students and others to police the fords leading to the mainland and to terrify the people:

Some fled saying that they did not want to become Christians, and these made for the fords, where the Jesuit students were keeping watch day and night, and lying in wait for them, some armed with firelocks, others with lances. Some people attempted to swim across, others died by falling into wells in this turmoil, others died of hunger in caves where they had taken refuge, one at least died of the bite of a serpent.<sup>30</sup>

Even if it is granted that other Jesuits were right in their opinion that Heredia possessed neither judgement nor prudence and that he was an unbalanced and unsatisfactory character, it is still possible that there was some fire beneath his smoke, and that the people had cause for falling into panic, though their fears may have been greater than was justified by the worst of the measures that were being planned against them.

Confirmation of this view is afforded by a representation made to the crown of Portugal in February 1563 by the bishops of Ceuta, Lisbon, Tangier, Angra, Portalegre, Lamego and the Algarve, stating that there were grave abuses prevalent in all of the Portuguese overseas mission fields, including the use of force, and the farcical baptism of uninstructed converts. On this C.R. Boxer aptly remarks that 'it is unlikely that seven leading Portuguese prelates would have made these grave allegations without being quite sure of their facts'.<sup>31</sup>

### 3 THE INQUISITION

A further sign of the increase of rigour was the establishment of the Inquisition in Goa.

Portugal lived in a state of anxiety about 'new Christians' – Jews and others who had been baptised in circumstances not conducive to genuine conversion, and who were suspected in many cases of continuing loyalty to the traditions of their fathers and to the religious observances in which they had been brought up. The fanatical King John III, who succeeded to the throne in 1521, decided to introduce the Inquisition into his dominions, mainly to deal with these 'new Christians'. The papal bull authorising the

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establishment of the Inquisition in Portugal was issued on 17 December 1531; it did not come into effect until 1541, and the first *auto da fê* was not held until August of that year.

Many Jews and new Christians took advantage of the opportunities offered by Portuguese expansion in Asia, hoping that distance from Europe would afford them better scope for the exercise of their special abilities in the fields of medicine, commerce and accountancy, and would secure for them a measure of freedom from the anxiety in which all their days in Portugal were spent. If these were their hopes, they were far from being perfectly fulfilled.

In the year 1543 a well-known doctor resident in Goa, Jerome Dias, a new Christian, was accused of having spoken certain things against the Christian faith in familiar discussions with his friends. Inquiry was made by the ecclesiastical authorities, and the charges found proved. As was the custom in those days, the convicted person was handed over to the secular authorities with the request that, if the death penalty was imposed, there should be no effusion of blood. The sentence, as recorded by Correa, was as follows:

Having seen the sentence of the Holy Church, in which bachelor [of medicine] Jerome Dias stands condemned in a case of heresy, the justice of our sire the king pronounces sentence to the effect that, in the said case, by public proclamation your body be burned alive, and reduced to ashes, for heresy against our holy catholic faith.<sup>32</sup>

The secular priest Diogo Borba, who had accompanied Bishop d'Albuquerque to India in 1535, dealt earnestly with the convicted man, brought him to repentance, and having heard his confession absolved him. In recognition of this penitence, the grimmer part of the sentence was remitted, and Dias was strangled in prison before his body was committed to the flames.

On the following Sunday the bishop, the kindest of men, preached in the cathedral, reading aloud the bull constituting the Inquisition, stressing the duty of complete loyalty to the Catholic faith, and the obligation resting on all Christians to make known to the authorities anything that came to their knowledge of heretical words or practices contrary to the usages of that faith.

In the year 1559 five men were publicly burned alive for the crime of sodomy. This was the penalty usually exacted in that age for what was regarded as a particularly heinous offence against the laws of God and man. The Jesuit letter for that year tells us that this speedy execution of justice spread terror and fear throughout the city. There was probably also relief in the minds of the resident Portuguese that the viceroy had acted so quickly and drastically to avert from their city the wrath of God.<sup>33</sup>

The first man, as far as we know, to recommend to the king the

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establishment of the Inquisition in India was Francis Xavier, whose letter on the subject has been quoted in an earlier chapter.<sup>34</sup>

The theme is taken up by Melchior Nunes Barreto. Writing to the general in Rome on 15 January 1559, he says:

This is to confirm to your paternity that the Inquisition is more necessary in these parts than anywhere else, since all the Christians here live side by side with Muslims, Jews and Hindus; and also the extent of the country itself causes laxity of conscience in persons residing therein. With the curb of the Inquisition they will lead good lives.<sup>35</sup>

Alexander Valignano associates the coming of the Inquisition with the experience of the provincial Silveira and Bishop Carneiro in Cochin in 1557, where it was discovered that many of the new Christians were meeting at night in the Jewish synagogue to carry on their Jewish rites. There being no Inquisition at the time in India, twenty of these were sent to Goa and thence to Lisbon to be dealt with according to their deserts. So the Inquisition came and 'cleansed India of much corruption and wickedness'.<sup>36</sup>

In 1560 the Inquisition for India was established. In that year the first archbishop of Goa, Gaspar de Leão Pimental,<sup>37</sup> arrived in Goa with the additional title of grand inquisitor, and accompanied by two other priests, to whom authority had been given to act with him as inquisitors – Alexis Dias Falcão and Francis Marques Botelho.

It is impossible to give any precise account of the operation of the Inquisition in Goa, since its records have been destroyed – no trace of them has been found either in Goa or in Lisbon.<sup>38</sup> But proceedings varied so little from country to country that a general idea of what happened in Goa and the other Portuguese possessions can be arrived at by inference.

A gloomy picture can be drawn of the fires of the Inquisition perpetually smouldering in the public places of Goa, and of the terrorised inhabitants living in a state of unchanging anxiety. A sober estimate of what actually happened suggests that the picture, grim as it undoubtedly was, was not quite as bad as that.

Careful calculation shows that in the sixty-three years between 1561 and 1623, 3,800 cases were tried by the Holy Office in Goa, or almost exactly sixty in a year. From the first establishment of the Inquisition until its abolition in 1774, 16,172 cases, or on the average 76 in a year came before it. What proportion of these were serious it is not possible to say.<sup>39</sup> In the years 1562 to 1567 eleven *autos da fé* took place. These must at all times have been terrifying displays of ecclesiastical power; but the horror was due more to menace than to execution. In a number of cases no one was actually put to death; the number of victims rarely exceeded three at the most, and only rarely was a living body committed to the flames.<sup>40</sup> This estimate is

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confirmed by the figures for Brazil provided by C.R. Boxer; between 1591 and 1763 400 Judaisers were shipped from Brazil to Lisbon; of these only eighteen were condemned to death, and of this number only one was actually burned alive.<sup>41</sup> It is, however, impossible to calculate even approximately the number of those who died miserably in the dungeons without ever having been brought to trial; nor is there any means of assessing the sheer misery endured by those who never knew from day to day what their fate might be, and by their relations, who never knew whether they would see them again.

There has been a tendency among historians to regard the activities of the Inquisition as among the main causes for the decline of Portuguese power in India. K.M. Panikkar, for example, writes:

the general intolerance of the authorities was well-known all over India and revolted the conscience of both Hindus and Muslims alike. The establishment of the Inquisition in Goa in 1561 and the *auto da fé* (first instance in 1563) further destroyed any chance of a sympathetic attitude towards missionary effort under the Portuguese in the powerful Hindu courts which ruled South India at the time.<sup>42</sup>

These confident statements cannot in the absence of corroborative evidence be taken at their face value. There were many causes for the decline of Portuguese power in India.<sup>43</sup> The Inquisition was certainly not the chief among these causes.<sup>44</sup> But its contribution to disaster should not be underestimated. It can be shown that a number of traders left the Portuguese territories to enjoy the freer atmosphere of the Hindu and Muslim states. And when the British power was established in Bombay, many Indian weavers and artisans moved from Goa to British territory, impelled by fear of the Inquisition.<sup>45</sup>

The final verdict may be given in the words of A.K. Priolkar, himself a Hindu:

Another consequence of major historical significance which resulted from the methods and activities of the Inquisition was the profound misunderstanding of the nature of Christianity which they implanted in the Indian mind . . . It was only natural that its victims should have drawn the inference that the Christian God in whose name these activities were carried on was a punitive God of vengeance and wrath.<sup>46</sup>

The Inquisition was abolished for the first time in 1774 under the influence of the Marquis de Pombal. It was restored in a modified form in April 1778. The final abolition came about in June 1812, when the Prince Regent informed the viceroy, Count de Sarzedas, that he had decided finally and definitively to abolish the Inquisition, and to establish for the future the rule that all religious cults were to enjoy equal toleration.<sup>47</sup>

4 COUNCILS OF THE CHURCH

The first ecclesiastical council of the Roman Catholic Church in India was held at Goa in 1567.<sup>48</sup>

The council of Trent, at its twenty-fourth session, held on 13 November 1563, had laid it down that provincial synods were to be held once in three years, and diocesan synods every year. This was part of the policy of centralisation and increased rigidity both in doctrine and practice, which stands in sharp contrast to the comparative flexibility of the middle ages. The first council of Goa marks the official arrival in India of Tridentine ideas, and the imposition on the church of an inflexible order which was not to vary in any single point from what they do at Rome.

The council assembled in the church of St Catherine, which had been declared to be the cathedral of the archdiocese of Goa. The president was the Most Reverend Father in Christ Dom Gaspar, first archbishop of the said city. With him were 'Dom George Themudo, Bishop of Cochin,<sup>49</sup> Manuel Coutinho, administrator of Moçambique, Vicente Viegas, *locum tenens* and procurator of Dom George, Bishop of Malacca, with the superiors of the orders of St Dominic and St Francis, and of the Society of Jesus, and others, doctors and masters in sacred theology, canons and laws.' During the course of its labours, the council passed forty-seven decrees of general concern (Action II), thirty-five in reformation of the affairs of the church (Action III), and thirty-three in reformation of morals (Action IV). It was agreed that the decrees should be printed in a language that all could understand, and therefore 'we command that the said council be translated into our Portuguese language, and be printed, that so it may be read and known of all men'.<sup>50</sup>

The council opened in gentle and generous fashion.

It is the chief desire of the council that all should come to the Catholic faith and be saved. But it declares in decree 1 that

it is not permitted to bring anyone to our faith and baptism by force through threats and intimidation, since no one comes to Christ in faith unless he be drawn by the heavenly Father in freely given love and prevenient grace. Those who desire to bring the unbelievers to the true faith must see to it that they treat them with gentleness and kindness.

The second decree speaks in the same direction. The spirit of caste is so strong in Goa that any high-caste Hindu who eats or drinks with a Hindu of lower caste immediately sinks to the caste of that other. It is now expressly forbidden to give food to any of the Hindus against his will, even with the desire of making Christians. An exception may be made of course in the case of extreme physical necessity.<sup>51</sup>

## *Councils of the Church*

From this point on the decrees tend to be less kindly, and to concentrate on a certain exclusiveness of Christians against all the rest of the world. A selection from the titles will indicate the policy to which the council was inclined:

- (6) All teachers of the non-Christian religions – Yogis, sorcerers etc. – are to be expelled.
- (7) Conversion from Hinduism to Islam and vice versa is not to be permitted, but only from a non-Christian to the Christian faith.
- (8) All heathen rites and ceremonies are forbidden and honour is not to be paid to the name of Muhammad.
- (12) Polygamy is forbidden. A man must live with his first wife, or take one of his concubines as his lawful wife.
- (25) Quarters are to be reserved in the city for Hindus and Muslims, and in them Christians will have no right to dwell.
- (31) It is desirable that non-Christians who live among Christians should keep Sunday and the greater festivals, and that shopkeepers should not open their shops until after the time of the principal mass.
- (42) Christian converts are to avoid every kind of contact with unbelievers such as might draw them back to the old ways; e.g. they are not to lament for the dead in the manner which they observed before their conversion.

As the council itself sententiously observes, it is one thing to make good laws, quite another to see that they are kept. Later councils did modify at certain points rules which had been found to be so strict that it was impossible to enforce them. But they repeat the injunctions against Hindu processions, against the lending by Christians of their jewels for Hindu purposes, against the employment of Hindus in positions of profit and consequence. If the regulations had been kept, it would not have been necessary to reiterate them. Many of the rules passed by the council were for the common good, and a real concern is shown for those who could not help themselves. But the general impression is of a nervous interference with the liberty of both Christians and non-Christians in many matters which are generally left to the conscience of the individual or to the customs of the community.

Many sources give an impression of the strength and stability of the Portuguese position in India and of the increasing power of the Roman Catholic church. Yet in reality the situation of both state and church was precarious. The years after 1560 seem to have been marked by an increase in hostility between Europeans and Indians, leading up to the tremendous events of the siege of Goa (1569–70). At no period is it possible to speak of absolute peace. The life of the European in India was exposed to many changes and chances. For those who had occasion to travel, these might

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include capture by pirates, enslavement, and forcible conversion to Islam with the alternative of death. A single vivid narrative may serve as background to this aspect of the history.

In the year 1568 one Father and three brothers set out from Cochin in an excellent ship. After one day's sailing they were attacked by the Muslim crews of three coasting vessels. For a whole day they were able to defend themselves; but then an explosion in the powder magazine set the ship on fire, and most of those on board, including the Jesuit, were fain to leap into the sea. The Father was immediately recognised as such by his clerical dress, and after twice refusing the invitation to save himself by turning Muslim was savagely despatched. It seems that two of the lay brothers endured the same fate. The third whose name is given as Antony Dionysius set out to swim to shore. But Muslims were waiting for him on the shore, caught him, stripped him as naked as the day on which he was born, and subjected him to miserable captivity. During this time he was able to persuade another young Portuguese, who was on the point of renouncing the Christian faith in order to save his life, to stand up boldly and confess himself a Christian, even if he had to pay for his hardihood with his life.<sup>52</sup> For the lay brother the story ended happily. His captivity did not last long, since the Muslims accepted a ransom of 150 scudi, and before long he was back among his friends in Goa none the worse for his adventures. A further letter of 9 January 1569 gives interesting details of his life in captivity, taken down from his own lips.<sup>53</sup>

### 5 THE GREAT VISITOR

The period which we are now considering is divided almost exactly in two by a notable document sent to the Jesuit general in Rome by Alexander Valignano, the great Visitor of the East.<sup>54</sup>

Born in 1539 in Chieti, Valignano had joined the Jesuit order in 1566 and in 1570 was ordained to the priesthood by William Chisholm, bishop of Dunblane in Scotland, whose uncle, also William, had in 1536 ordained one John Knox. In 1573 Valignano, in spite of expressed unwillingness, was secretly appointed Visitor of the province of the East Indies, which stretched from the Cape of Good Hope to Japan. On 21 March 1574 he left Lisbon, accompanied by no less than forty-one Jesuits intended for service in the eastern province. On 6 September, after a prosperous voyage, he set foot for the first time on the soil of India. He died at Macao on 26 January 1606, having never once returned to Europe, and having given more than thirty years of service to the East as against the ten achieved by Xavier.

Of Valignano Fr Wicki has rightly written that 'after Xavier he was the Jesuit who in the 16th century did more than any other to determine the destiny of the missions in the East'.<sup>55</sup> His services to the cause of Christ were indeed invaluable. Among other things he wrote not the first but the



most memorable of the early lives of Xavier, and thereby set a new standard for the writing of church history in India.<sup>56</sup>

His great qualities, however, were matched by certain grave defects. Of his first long letter to the Jesuit general in 1574, the prudent editor remarks that 'the Visitor, being distressed by many things, expresses too confident a judgement, makes evident his dislike of the Portuguese, and despises the Indians, even the Christians among them. His deep affection for the mission to Japan makes him at times unfair to the missions in India.' He was irascible in temper and impetuous by nature. As a result some of the best of the Fathers, men of long experience and prudence, found it difficult to get on with him, especially when he made use of his close friendship with the general and others in Rome to extend his already considerable authority.<sup>57</sup>

The principal complaint against him refers, however, to the relations between the Jesuits and other representatives of the church in the East. In the days of Xavier and after, relations with bishops and others had been excellent. In the time of Valignano all was changed. Jesuits and bishops came to be frequently at loggerheads. It was in the period of Valignano that grave controversies broke out in India with the Franciscans, and in Japan with the members of other religious orders which from 1593 onwards had been entering the country.

It must be recorded to his credit that he was in favour of such measure of 'accommodation' or 'adaptation' as would not be out of accord with the Catholic faith, in this going beyond what had come to be the accepted policy in Rome. The subsequent condemnation of such measures by Rome may have affected the reputation which Valignano in later times enjoyed in the church.<sup>58</sup>

Valignano had been distressed, like many before and after him, by the ignorance which prevailed at Rome concerning conditions in the lands of the missions, and by the slowness and difficulty of communications, which meant that instructions sent out from the centre were out of date and irrelevant before they arrived. So he sends out his document, not only to help those in Rome, but also to serve as a manual for those who later may be sent to India and the East, since one who has had much experience of the government of provinces in Europe, when he arrives in India, will find himself embarrassed and raw, until with time he has obtained some knowledge of the situation, and since such a one can cause great disorder for lack of such information as can now be provided for him.<sup>59</sup>

## 6 GOA AND ITS ENVIRONS

More had been done in certain directions than the somewhat pessimistic view of Valignano might suggest.

The college of St Paul had continued to grow both in numbers and in

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efficiency. In 1556 it was reported that there were about 450 boys in the elementary school. Much more important was the middle school, to which boys were admitted at the age of not less than thirteen and not more than fifteen. In that year the number of Goanese boys was twenty-one, and in the following year forty.<sup>60</sup> The curriculum was still purely Western and based on the classics. After mastering the elements of grammar, the boys were brought up on Virgil, Cicero *de Amicitia*, Ovid's *Tristia* (a fairly safe selection from the varied works of that author), and Sallust. There is no mention of any study of any part of the Bible. Earlier attempts to teach some Greek had been given up. Plans for a class in philosophy were slow to mature, but moral theology was being taught by Fr (later Bishop) Carneiro.

One of the notable fruits of this long labour was the first ordination of a native Indian from the neighbourhood of Goa. Andrew Vaz had been one of the first pupils of the college of St Paul. For many years his conduct had been exemplary. He had a good knowledge of Portuguese and was able to interpret for the Fathers. So, as it was judged that he had the necessary gifts for carrying out the duties of a priest, he was ordained by the patriarch of Ethiopia. It was arranged that he should say his first mass with all solemnity in the college on Ascension Day 19 May 1558; the governor was present, and the church was filled by Portuguese of high station. The new priest's mother and other relations had come in from his village; as they came forward to make their offerings, they kissed his hands with tears of joy in their eyes.<sup>61</sup>

An even more important step was the decision to admit an Indian candidate to the Society of Jesus. Xavier had been against such a step being taken, having no exaggerated ideas as to the capacity and devotion of his Indian fellow-Christians. But his judgement was set on one side.

A letter written by Peter Luis in November 1559, in which he makes known to the general in Rome his desire to be admitted to the society,<sup>62</sup> has been preserved. He is a Brāhman by race, with Hindu parents, but God delivered him from the jaws of hell, making him a Christian at Quilon in 1547 when he was fifteen years old. He had been for five years interpreter for Fr Nicolas Lancilotto, who would have liked to send him to Europe; this having proved impossible, he had joined the college in Goa in 1555, and had there studied grammar and rhetoric, and was about to embark on logic.

The letter written from Rome by Fr John de Polanco on 31 December 1560 contains a passage of the greatest importance:

We have considered what your reverence has written to the effect that the peoples of that country are not fitted to join the society. Fr Francis [Xavier] also wrote in similar terms to our Father Ignatius. That may have been true at that time, and may also be true at this time of the majority among them. Nevertheless it seems hard to shut the door upon those whom God may have called to this service in our institution, if they have the gifts necessary for it, since there is no acceptance of persons or nations in the sight of God.<sup>63</sup>

## Goa and its Environs

So Luis was accepted, and began his novitiate in Goa in 1561, but had to endure hard probation. He did not receive priest's orders till 1575. Thereafter he worked in Kerala, where of course he knew the language, or on the Fisher Coast. There are many references to him in the letters of Fr Henry Henriques; these reveal him as a devout and diligent, and, though not distinguished, invaluable helper through his knowledge of the languages and his devotion to the cause of Christ. He showed considerable skill in the printing of catechisms which had been prepared in the Indian languages. He died in 1596.<sup>64</sup>

Many years were to pass before another Indian was admitted to the Society of Jesus in India.

One of the principal obstacles to successful evangelism was the total or almost total ignorance of Hinduism in which the Portuguese had lived for sixty years. They did not care to know, and there were few Hindus who were anxious to instruct them. The darkness was to some extent lifted by an unexpected event of the year 1559.

There was on the island of Goa a young Brāhman of exceptional talents, on whom his compatriots placed great hopes. He had had many contacts with the Fathers; but it was only after long hesitation that he made up his mind and decided of his own free will to be baptised. He expressed the desire that there should be no special solemnity in his baptism, and did not ask that the viceroy should be his godfather. He received in baptism the name Manoel d'Oliveira.<sup>65</sup>

Manoel knew that on the mainland there was a Brāhman who had spent eight years collecting and translating from Sanskrit into Marāthī many ancient books, and especially the eighteen books of *Veaço* (Vyāsa), whom they esteemed as the greatest prophet of their religion.<sup>66</sup> One day Manoel crossed the strait to the mainland, entered the house of the Brāhman, and carried off his entire library.<sup>67</sup> The Fathers realised how valuable this information would be in confounding the arguments of the Brāhmins. Manoel spent some time at the college, translating the principal sections of the Hindu works into Portuguese. The provincial arranged for a number of copies to be made, but this work was not well done, as the copyists were the boys of the college, and what they wrote was not carefully revised.<sup>68</sup> From a long account of a dispute between Fr Francis Rodriguez and a Hindu it appears that the Fathers had acquired some knowledge of the *Bhagavadgītā*, and that this had been translated for them into Portuguese.<sup>69</sup>

In one other respect a beginning had been made in meeting the real needs of the situation. In 1556 only one priest could speak Konkani and hear confessions in that language; his services were therefore much appreciated by the people of Choraõ.<sup>70</sup> In 1563 some young Jesuits were set to study Konkani with the help of a Goanese student. But in Goa too much

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Portuguese was spoken; subsequently students were sent to live on Choraõ, where they would hear nothing but Konkani all the time. This experiment was so successful that when Archbishop Gaspar visited Choraõ a year later, the students greeted him in elegant Konkani, with a Goan cleric to translate the speeches for his benefit. The local people said that the students explained Christian truth in Konkani better than they could have done themselves, even if they had known as much theology.<sup>71</sup> When in 1567 two of these young men were raised to the priesthood, the number of Konkani-speaking priests reached four.

The third council of Goa (1585) (Action II, decree 25) dealt with the matter of the Indian languages. It was laid down that

a compendium of Christian doctrine, suited to the nations of these parts, should be drawn up in the Portuguese language, and that this should be taught in all parts of India to preserve conformity in all; and this should be translated into the languages of those countries where there are Christians and that instruction should be given from it. And in the same way a brief catechism, on the basis of the Tridentine catechism, but adapted to the natives of these parts, should be drawn up.<sup>72</sup>

Though the council did not know it, the man who would carry into effect many of its desires was already in India.

Thomas Stephens (or Stevens) was born in 1549 in Wiltshire, the son of a well-to-do merchant. After various adventures in England, he made his way to Rome, and there on 20 October 1570 was admitted as a novice of the Society of Jesus. In 1579 he was given permission to join the Indian mission. Leaving Lisbon on 4 April of that year, he arrived in Goa on 24 October, and thus began the forty years' service of the man who is commonly known as the first Englishman to reside in India.<sup>73</sup>

Few letters from the hand of Stephens have survived. But fortunately a letter written to his father less than a month after his arrival and giving details of his voyage is among them. His first impressions of India are vivid but not markedly different from those of many other travellers; he notes the scanty clothing of the majority of the people, and then proceeds:

Of the fruits and trees that be here I cannot now speake, for I should make another letter as long as this . . . For hitherto I have not seene a tree here, whose like I have seen in Europe, the vine excepted, which nevertheless here is to no purpose, so that all the wines are brought out of Portugal. The drinke of this country is good water, or wine of the Palme tree, or of a fruit called Cocos. And this shall suffice for this time.<sup>74</sup>

A Latin letter written to his brother in 1583 gives some account of his experiences with the Konkani language:

The languages of the region are very numerous. The pronounciation of them is not disagreeable, and their structure is not unlike that of Latin and Greek; their phrases

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and constructions are really admirable. Each letter has the force of a syllable,<sup>75</sup> and there are as many varieties of them as are the possible combinations of consonants with vowels or of mutes with liquids.<sup>76</sup>

It is impossible to improve on the character-sketch of Stephens given by Fr Schurhammer:

He had a robust constitution, enjoyed good health, and was by natural disposition energetic, vivacious and brimful of optimism. Possessed of a keen and observant mind, he had not only made the best of his broken studies of the humanities, mathematics and theology, but had continually added to his store of knowledge and profited by long experience. Moreover he had schooled himself to such a degree of humility, that what shone in the eyes of his fellow-workers was the prudence and gentleness of his dealings, while his spiritual detachment made it impossible for his Superiors to discover any preference for any special mission station or field of work.<sup>77</sup>

After only six months' study of theology Stephens was ordained priest and sent to the peninsula of Salsette which was to be his home for nearly forty years. At the time of his arrival, the mission had under its care about 8,000 Christians out of 80,000 inhabitants. When he died almost the whole of the population was Christian. Most of this long period was spent in quiet, uneventful labour. But in 1582 the even tenour of life was disturbed by one of the most disastrous series of events in the whole history of Roman Catholic missions in India.

Two villages in the extreme south of the peninsula of Salsette – Cuncolim and Assolna in the spelling used by the Portuguese – had been specially obstinate in holding fast to the Hindu way and its ceremonies. Early in 1582, in reprisal for injuries done to a messenger who was carrying despatches from Cochin to the viceroy, a fleet of boats sailed down from Goa and destroyed the temple at Assolna. At the same time the captain of Rachol marched down with troops to Cuncolim; a Jesuit Fr Berno set fire to the large temple in the village; a number of smaller shrines was also destroyed. Then Fr Berno, with incredible folly, 'killed a sacred cow on the spot, with the double object of defiling the holy places and destroying the object of superstition, and he profaned a sacred tank by casting into it the intestines of the slaughtered animal'.<sup>78</sup>

The authorities seem to have been unaware of the lasting fury occasioned by the outrage. In 1583 a visit was paid to Salsette by the new provincial Rudolf Aquaviva, formerly of the mission to the Great Mogul, accompanied by a number of priests, some Indian Christians and a group of Portuguese gentlemen. On 15/25 July, the anger of the people broke out in open violence. Aquaviva, who stood forth as the acknowledged leader, was the first to suffer. Then the mob fell on Fr Berno, the object of their special animosity; the other two priests followed soon after. A lay brother, Aranha,

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though terribly wounded, survived in hiding till the next morning, when he was discovered, killed and horribly mutilated. Altogether fourteen others were killed, the bodies were stripped by outcaste menials, thrown together into a large pit which, this being monsoon time, was full of water, and covered over with branches to prevent discovery.

When, the same evening, news of the disaster reached Goa, there was no limit to the distress and dismay caused by events for which there was no precedent in the history of the missions. Many Christians had died at the hands of pirates or in sporadic outbursts of violence. But so ruthless a massacre, carried out by the generally kindly and gentle Hindu population, was unexpected and alarming. It was decided that the bodies of the martyrs must be recovered and given Christian burial.

It fell to Stephens as rector of the college at Rachol to set about the recovery of the bodies. At first the people denied all knowledge, but before long were tricked into agreeing to the surrender; the menials carried the bodies to the north bank of the river, where they were received by the group from Goa and reverently carried to the church. It was found that the bodies were so swollen by their immersion in water that it was not possible to array them in Jesuit robes; but with such order and ceremony as was possible they were laid to rest.<sup>79</sup>

What follows is far from edifying. Though the Fathers pleaded that vengeance should not be taken on the guilty, fifteen of the leading men who came in to plead for pardon and to promise friendship were immediately cut down by the soldiery; others were pursued to the mainland and done to death. The five villages concerned were deprived of their liberty, two being handed over in fief to one Portuguese, and three to another.<sup>80</sup>

Thomas Stephens was one of the first Europeans to master an Indian language so well as to be able to write in it idiomatically; he was the author of the first Christian work in Konkani ever to appear from the press.

The first work to call for attention is the *Doutrina Christão*, a manual of Christian instruction in the form of a dialogue, which was finally printed at Rachol in Roman character in 1622.

This was not the first manual of its kind to appear from the press. A simple manual had been prepared on the Fisher Coast by three Indians, sent to Portugal and printed in Tamil and Portuguese 'in the very noble and loyal city of Lisbon by the command of our Lord the king and checked by the Holy Inquisition . . . 11th of February in the year 1554. *Laus Deo.*' As no Tamil types were available, the Tamil words had to be printed in Roman letters. This is believed to be the first book ever to be printed in any Indian language.<sup>81</sup>

Stephens naturally wished that his work could be printed in the proper

Konkanī script,<sup>82</sup> but no types were available and this for a good reason, as Stephens explained in a letter to the Jesuit general of the year 1608: 'I have for many years longed to see books printed in Indian types, as was done in the Malabar mission. The chief difficulty is that, for such production, one needs as many as 600 matrices [moulds], instead of twenty-four, though at a pinch we could manage with only 200.'<sup>83</sup>

The language of the *Doutrina* is correct, though differing considerably from modern Konkanī. Like all translators Stephens was faced by the problem of the choice of words for Christian ideas. Three possibilities are open – to introduce foreign words for ideas for which there is no natural equivalent in the language; to accept difficult words in the language, which are unlikely to be known to many readers, and to explain their meaning; or to use words current in the language, in the hope that growing understanding will eliminate misunderstandings which may arise from the non-Christian use of the words. Stephens on the whole opted for the second of these courses. He did not use many foreign words, as did so many of his successors, thus producing what M. Saldanha indignantly calls language 'tão empobrecida no suo léxico, saturado de vocábulos estranhos' ('so impoverished in its vocabulary, saturated with foreign words') (p. 33). But at times he made use of popular terms, to the scandal of the more conservative Christians who did not approve of what seemed to be a conflation of Hindu with Christian ideas.

Stephens' grammar of the Konkanī language, *Arte da língoa Canarim*, revised by other members of the Society of Jesus, was printed at Rachol in 1640. Thus Konkanī has the glory of being the first Indian language to have a printed grammar. As Saldanha courteously remarks, Stephens showed himself a worthy precursor of his English compatriots who later on, as rulers of India, undertook the task of developing the culture and progress of all the Indian languages.

The work on which the fame of Stephens principally rests is his Christian *Purāṇa*, or more correctly *Purāṇa of biblical history*. This immense poem of 10,962 stanzas is written in elegant Marāthī,<sup>84</sup> and was intended to take for Christians the place of the Hindu *Purāṇas*, full as these are of not always edifying stories of Hindu gods. The first part tells the story of the Old Testament up to the prophecies foretelling the coming of the Lord; the second recounts the story of the Lord's life. The *Purāṇa* immediately became popular.<sup>85</sup> Many stories are told of its effects on the minds of the people. For instance we are told that, when Tippu Sultan carried away many Konkanī Christians and kept them in captivity in Seringapatam from 1784 to 1799, they were able to maintain their hope and confidence through the use of the *Purāṇa*, of which clearly they knew large sections by heart.

In 1552 Fr Henry Henriques, almost alone and often in poor health, was struggling on among a people, who, though they had been Christians for nearly twenty years, showed few signs of having understood or embraced the principles of the Gospel. Henriques was a humble man, always inclined to look on the dark side of things. Yet few men in the whole history of the Indian mission have served so long, so well and so creatively as he.

A quarter of a century later, in 1577, the situation is very different from that of 1552. There are now ten Fathers and a lay brother resident on the coast. Three brothers and a Father are in Punnaikāyal learning the language, to the great advantage of the work.<sup>86</sup> By 1580 the number of those stationed on the Fisher Coast had risen to fifteen.<sup>87</sup>

The pattern which was to be followed for two centuries was beginning to take shape. A Jesuit was stationed in each of the main villages on the Coast, exercising great authority in all the affairs of the community.<sup>88</sup> From 1580 onwards churches began to be built in regular style. There was a hospital in Punnaikāyal, and there seem to have been elementary schools in a number of places. The Jesuits were not interested in higher education, except as a means of producing priests, and the education of girls seems hardly to have been considered even as a possibility. Already the rules for the observance of Sunday were strictly enforced – there was to be no fishing on Sunday, a rule which could hardly be broken unobserved on that flat and sandy shore. Part of the catch on Friday was to be given for the support of the church.<sup>89</sup>

In the Jesuit letters there are many complaints about the low standard of Christian life, and about the long persistence, especially among the women, of old pagan superstitions and practices. Fr Henriques came to the conclusion that the only remedy for this state of affairs would be the formation of a confraternity, to be called the confraternity of our Lady of the Rosary. He worked long and ardently on the rules for such a confraternity. At last, early in 1578, he was able to send off a draft of the rules, which fills forty-two printed pages.<sup>90</sup> But he was continually revising them, and they did not reach their final form until January 1586.

An impression of the working of the confraternity is given by the Visitor Fr Gaspar Alvares SJ. There were separate sessions – for the men on Fridays and for the women on Tuesdays. ‘The members are regular in worship; they pacify disputes, care for the poor and the sick; their concern is to keep the law of God and to draw others to it, so that bad Christians, and the Portuguese, and even unbelievers who see them, are much edified.’<sup>91</sup>

Many and varied as were the ministries carried out by Henry Henriques, it is through his services to the Tamil language that he has won undying fame. From 1551 onwards he refers unceasingly to his studies of the



language, and to his hopes of producing a grammar and theological writings in it. He had no helps to the study of Tamil, which for a foreigner is always an exceedingly difficult language. To learn it by ear, mainly from simple people whose enunciation would leave much to be desired, must have presented appalling difficulties. Henriques records naively his surprise at discovering that the language really has cases and conjugations, like any European language.<sup>92</sup>

The date at which he completed his Tamil grammar is uncertain, but it was probably earlier than 1567. In 1566 he writes that 'the *arte* had been perfected more this year than it was. I am convinced that, if I am sent some colleagues who for a whole year would do nothing other than study it, they would be able at the end of that year to hear confessions.'<sup>93</sup>

That Henriques had prepared a Tamil grammar, and that he was the first European to do so, had long been known. But for nearly four centuries no one knew that the work was actually in existence. In 1954, Fr Xavier Thani Nāyagam found a copy in the National Library of Lisbon, and made his discovery known to the world in an article, 'Tamil manuscripts in European libraries'.<sup>94</sup> No one is likely to disagree with his conclusion that 'from internal and external evidence, it is clear that it is a manuscript copy of the first Tamil grammar known to be compiled by a European and the work of a Jesuit missionary, Henrique Henriques (1520–1600)'.

Henriques had, apparently, never been introduced to the existing Tamil grammars compiled by Indian writers, not even to the *Nannūl*, the simple metrical grammar through which generations of Tamil schoolchildren have been introduced to the structure of the language. In consequence he never grasped what the structure of a Dravidian language is. He treats it as though it was Latin, and in the process of adjustment to this Procrustes' bed what in Tamil is simple and elegant becomes clumsy and unwieldy. Yet that Henriques, who clearly lacked the linguistic gifts of the Italians Nobili and Beschi, achieved so much is evidence of unwearied diligence and devotion.

In 1576 Henriques was relieved of his heavy duties as superior of the mission, and set free to complete and see through the press in Tamil characters two catechisms, a longer and a shorter, in 1578 and 1579.<sup>95</sup> The types are remarkably well cut and clear. The large catechism is a translation of the catechism in dialogue form produced by Fr Marcos Jorge at Lisbon in 1566. The shorter seems to go back to that produced by Xavier in Portuguese in 1542–3, and translated into Tamil with the help of his rather incompetent assistants.<sup>96</sup> For a good many Christian terms Henriques gave up the attempt to find Tamil equivalents, and transliterated the Portuguese words.<sup>97</sup>

Towards the end of 1585 or early in 1586 Henriques was able to complete a work on which he had been engaged for a number of years – the *Flos*

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*Sanctorum*, a selection from the lives of the saints with other edifying material for the Christian year. From a number of references in letters and other works the book was known to have existed, but it had entirely disappeared from view, until by good fortune the same scholar who had discovered the grammar brought to light a copy of the *Flos* in the Vatican library.<sup>98</sup> In the reprint of 1967 the Tamil text fills 669 pages. The printing of so massive a volume in what was still a little known language was a remarkable achievement; the type is clear, and considerably more elegant than that supplied from Germany to the Protestant missionaries a century later. Even in photographic reproduction the text can be read without difficulty, though naturally the improvements in orthography later introduced by Fr Beschi are not to be found.

The Tamil style of the *Flos* is a strange and rather daunting amalgam. At times the choice of words is correct, and the rules of grammar are strictly followed. Then suddenly there is a descent into colloquialism or even vulgarity; no doubt this reflects Tamil as Henriques had heard it spoken by his Parava friends. For almost all technical Christian terms Henriques simply transliterated the Portuguese word. Proper names are given in the Portuguese forms, and with as close an approximation as is possible to the Portuguese pronunciation. Thus John appears as Cuvam (in one case Cuvani), and in Theodore, the first o is long and the second short, the reverse of what each is in Greek.

Much legendary material is included in the *Flos*, and many exhortations to penitence and devotion. But this is not all. In dealing with the Epiphany story Henriques follows rather closely the narrative in Matthew 2. In the long section on the sufferings of Christ (pp. 565–607), the account does not stray far from the story as given in the four Gospels. But Henriques follows Xavier and many others of his time in thinking that no part of the Scriptures should be directly translated into the language of the people. By 1585 the council of Trent had stretched its long shadow over the missions, and the more generous views of the pre-Tridentine bishops had been eclipsed.

Henriques lived on almost till the end of the century. He died on 6 February 1600 in his eightieth year, having completed more than fifty years of service on the Coast. The Jesuit letter for 1601 has this to say of him:

The devotion which the Christians have for him is so great that I cannot describe it . . . There is nothing to wonder at in the Christians doing this, who were brought up by him and nurtured in the faith for so many years, when the Moors and Hindus who were not such beneficiaries showed and go on showing him so great a devotion that one cannot but praise our Lord for it . . . Moreover on the day he died all the Muslims of the neighbouring village Kāyalpatnam fasted; the Hindus also of the neighbouring villages fasted two days, and closed all their shops and bazaars to express their grief over the death of the good and holy old man.

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Henriques lacked the linguistic genius of Beschi, the adaptability of Nobili, and the adventurous zeal of Francis Xavier. But he had that gift, of all gifts the most necessary for a missionary in India – tenacity. Through loneliness, depression, and not infrequent illness, he held on, and at his death left behind a cohesive and well-ordered church. He must be reckoned among the great pillars of the Indian church.<sup>99</sup>

#### 8 OTHER EXTENSIONS OF THE WORK

By the end of the century the Jesuits were established in all the centres of Portuguese influence, both in those which were regarded as territories of the king of Portugal, and also in places where the Portuguese had constructed fortresses by permission of the local rulers and exercised little or no control outside the narrow limits thus assigned to them. Much space could be filled with detailed account of these various enterprises; but there would be little new or specially interesting to record, since most of the work was a repetition of what had been done already.

One venture, however, does demand record, since it involved a departure from the usual Jesuit method of clinging to the coast, and led to a penetration of an inland region, populated almost exclusively by Hindus with whom the Portuguese had had relations in trade but so far in no other way. In 1597 the Jesuit Visitor Nicolas Pimenta urged the rector of the college at Mylapore to send missionaries into the kingdom of Vijayanagar.<sup>100</sup>

The splendour of the kingdom of Vijayanagar came to an end in the tremendous disaster of the battle of Talikota or Rakshasi-Tangadi (1565).<sup>101</sup> Vijayanagar never recovered its erstwhile power, but, though gravely weakened, it did not cease to be a kingdom. After a period of confusion and uncertainty Venkata II (Venkatapati devar) restored order, was able to recover many of the lost territories, and restrained the aggressions of the local chieftains (*pāḷayakkārar*). Through his interest in Christianity he finds a place in our history.

The first Jesuit contact seems to have been made not with the king but with Krishṇappā Nāyaka, the ruler of Gingi, the immense fortifications of which still remain as evidence of former greatness. Fr Pimenta, when on a visit to all the Jesuit stations in the south, encountered the Nāyak at Gingi, 'the greatest citie we have seen in India, and larger than any in Portugal, Lisbon excepted'. He was most kindly received. Krishṇappā was at that time building a new city, Krishṇapatam, now the Hindu quarter of Porto Novo. He urged Fr Pimenta to build a church there, and promised both a site and revenues to maintain the church. Pimenta accordingly summoned Fr Alexander Levi, a man of renowned holiness and of great knowledge of

the vernacular, from Travancore to take charge of this pioneer venture.<sup>102</sup>

It was at this point that Pimenta suggested that the Fathers at St Thomé should attempt to establish a mission at Chandragiri, at that time the capital of the realm of Venkata. Contact was made with Oba rāya, the father-in-law of Venkata, and with his help two of the Fathers were able to proceed to Chandragiri, which was reached towards the end of 1598. Their reception left nothing to be desired in cordiality. Oba rāya afforded them liberty to build a church in any city of their choosing, and a little later introduced them to the king. Venkata was equally cordial, and listened carefully to all that the Fathers had to tell him. His comment was that these men are like *sannyāsis*, but they are in addition *gurupi* ('learned priests'). As they left, Oba rāya told them that the king had decided to give them the revenue of two villages to maintain their work, and permission to build as many churches as they wished in his dominions. Later this was confirmed, with the permission to build a church in Chandragiri itself.<sup>103</sup>

Overjoyed, the Fathers on their return to San Thomé urged the authorities in Goa to enter in through this open door. Pimenta accordingly chose six missionaries, of whom three arrived in Chandragiri on 16 August 1599. They were at once granted a place for the building of a church; as soon as this was completed, they were visited by crowds of Hindus, who showed great reverence for the images which they had set up, and to whom they were able to expound the tenets of the faith. To the king also they were able to show pictures and to explain the faith; but, though he manifested considerable understanding,

neither he, nor any other of the people, until now are prepared to be baptised; but we trust that God will illuminate their understanding, and give them strength of will to recognise their errors and to embrace the truth which we continue to declare to them . . . We have good hopes of their conversion, since the king is extremely friendly to the Portuguese.<sup>104</sup>

A letter from the previous year (Fr Coutinho, letter of August 1600), quoted in the Annual letter for 1602, gives a vivid picture of the situation:

Our little house (*domuncula*) has a large compound, exposed to a health-giving breeze, very well suited for the building of a church and a residence, and well sheltered from noisy crowds. We have, for the moment, built a small church on the site, adequate for our present needs, to serve until we have the means for building a larger one.<sup>105</sup>

The Jesuits had successfully followed up one of their usual plans, and had managed to settle in the neighbourhood of a powerful sovereign whose friendship they had succeeded in winning. It is strange that Venkata showed such unusual friendship and generosity to his European visitors; but, as in

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the case of the great Akbar, there is no reason to doubt the genuineness of his attachment to them. These promising beginnings were not fated to lead to the expected success; in 1610, by direct order of Philip III king of Spain and Portugal, the Jesuits were withdrawn from Chandragiri, and no others were sent in their place.<sup>106</sup>

Yet one more episode may be recorded to illustrate the immense adventurousness of the Jesuits, and their willingness to pursue any opportunity, however unpromising, for spreading the Gospel.

Word had reached the Serra of a mountain people called the Todas,<sup>107</sup> who had in some long distant past been Christians but in process of time had entirely lost the faith. It seemed right and suitable to recover these lost sheep. So, after an inconclusive visit by a *cattanār* and deacon of the Thomas Christians, in 1603 Fr James Fenicio was sent to visit the area and to investigate the possibilities of a mission.

Fenicio, who was born in Capua about AD 1558, had arrived in India in 1582, and was to spend the next forty-eight years in the Serra or in parts of Malabar not far away. All the records speak of him as a devout and diligent missionary, and as one of the few who had really mastered the Malayālam language. His reputation had slept for nearly three centuries, when in 1922 he was restored to well-deserved fame through being identified as the author of a notable study of Indian religion and customs, the *Livro da Seita dos Indios Orientais*,<sup>108</sup> preserved in the Sloane collection of manuscripts in the British Museum.

Fr Fenicio's own account of his visit to the Nilgiri Hills is contained in a letter written to the vice-provincial in Calicut.<sup>109</sup> He was accompanied by an Indian Christian who could speak Canarese, and could therefore communicate with the Badagas, the neighbours of the Todas whose language is akin to Canarese, and perhaps also with the Todas themselves.<sup>110</sup> Fenicio complains bitterly of the hardness of the way and of the cold. But his account of what he saw is life-like and full of touches which can at once be recognised by one who knows the Todas and their country as they are today. 'The water is excellent but icy cold; it flows down from the mountains; it cannot be drunk at a draught because of the cold; one is obliged to pause and after drinking one has to wait a while for the gums and teeth to become warm.'

Fenicio managed to meet a number of Todas, including their chief priest. He explained to them the reason for his coming, and gave them some outline of the Christian law:

I asked if they would follow all my instructions, and they said they would. Then I asked if they would leave off worshipping the buffalo and the 300 pagodas. They

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replied that they feared that the buffaloes and pagodas would do them some harm . . . I asked if they would give up the custom of two brothers marrying one woman, and they said they would. I asked if they thought it right to give their wives to the *Pallem* (priest); one old man replied, 'If it is the command of God, what can we do?'

Fenicio promised that he would come again and spend a longer time with them. But his prudent judgement was: 'I do not think that the present is a suitable time for the Society to undertake such out-of-the-way enterprises, since we cannot attend to others of greater importance, which are close at hand, for want of workers. The Thodares (Todas) only number about a thousand, and they are scattered about four mountains.'<sup>111</sup> So nothing came of this adventure; about three centuries were to pass before the baptism of the first Toda convert to Christianity.

### 9 THE WORK OF OTHER ORDERS

The Jesuits were so numerous, so well extended, and so adventurous in their methods of work that it has been necessary to devote considerable space to the story of their enterprises. But the secular clergy and other religious orders were also at work, and to them we must now turn.

The seventeenth century saw a considerable increase in the number of orders at work in India. Later surveys will include mention of the work of Carmelites, Oratorians, Theatines and Capuchins. For the sixteenth century only the work of Franciscans, Dominicans and Augustinians remains to be recorded.

The Franciscans were first in the field, and for a time were the only missionaries working among non-Christians in India.

Their headquarters, like those of other orders, were in Goa, with Cochin as second in importance. But by 1585 they had convents in nine places – Cochin, Cannanore, two in Goa, Chaul, Thana, Bassein and Damaun, and, on the Coromandel Coast, S. Thomé and Negapatam. All these places were in Portuguese territory or under Portuguese influence. Increasingly the Franciscans came to concentrate their work on the instruction and care of those who were already Christians, or were coming forward for baptism.<sup>112</sup>

But this was not the whole story. In 1550 the viceroy Affonso de Noronha requested the Franciscans to take up the work on the island of Bardes in the neighbourhood of Goa. There is reason to think that the Jesuits already had some work on Bardes, but the majority of the inhabitants were still non-Christians. The Franciscans worked with great success bringing the whole population to the knowledge of the Christian faith and destroying temples to the number of 200. To these achievements they were wont to point when accused of neglecting the duty of preaching the Gospel to the unbelievers.

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By 1585 there were already seven organised parishes, each with its own church and parish priest. By 1595 the number had risen to eleven. In January 1596 the king of Portugal expressed himself as very well pleased to learn that the brothers of the order of Francis are working with great diligence in the lands of Bardes and in other territories adjacent to it for the conversion of the Hindus, and are producing much fruit in the service of our Lord.<sup>113</sup>

Should members of religious orders hold office as parish priests? This was a subject of controversy in all the missions of the Western and Eastern worlds. The bishops naturally wished to bring all the parishes under their control and to assert their right of appointing the clergy serving in them. The religious tended to rely heavily on the rights accorded to the kings of Spain and Portugal under the terms of the royal patronate, and to maintain their independence of the bishop. They cited in support of their position the brief of Pope Pius V of the year 1567,<sup>114</sup> in which permission is granted to all religious persons of the mendicant orders residing in the Indies to hold the office of parish priest, to perform marriages and celebrate the sacraments of the church as they have been accustomed to do, without obtaining any licence for these acts from the local bishop. This brief was issued to Philip II of Spain; but since the terms of the *patronatus* and the *padroado* are practically identical, this must be regarded as having been automatically valid also for the domains of the king of Portugal. The controversy was not finally settled until 1766, when the parishes were withdrawn from the religious in favour of the secular clergy.<sup>115</sup>

According to Gonzaga,<sup>116</sup> in 1587 the number of Christians under the care of the Franciscans amounted to 40,000. Seven thousand of these were in the island of Bardes, 2,000 in Bassein and Agashi. The brothers in Cannanore had baptised 10,000, and Br Antony Porto had himself baptised 10,156 persons. Thirty religious resided in the convent at Cochin and fifteen in Cannanore. No other religious body was so well represented at Cannanore. In view of the inveterate tendency of missionaries to inflate their statistics these figures must be regarded with a good deal of suspicion. No indication is given in the sources as to the castes to which the converts belonged; but in view of the statement of Robert Nobili in 1610 that in these regions no one of distinction and no member of the higher castes had been baptised, it must be taken as probable that they were drawn from the less prosperous communities.

The Dominicans, after a somewhat abortive early start, only came into effective operation in 1548 with the foundation of their house in Goa. When the bishop divided up the island of Goa, the Dominicans were placed in charge of five parishes. They were strong in Diu, where from 1571 onwards

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they had the right to board ships returning from Mecca and, if they found on board them Abyssinian slaves, to liberate and to baptise them.<sup>117</sup>

The most exciting piece of information about the Dominicans relates to Fr Francis de Faria, who in 1593 arrived in Goa with five companions, and proceeded to set up what is described as a kind of university, the first to be so called in India.<sup>118</sup> The centre for this work was the convent of St Thomas at Pangim; courses were given in philosophy and theology, but the aim of all the studies was to prepare the students for the service of the church. It was natural that the Dominicans with their care for high standards of learning should have been the first pioneers in this field in India; but the days of universities, in the broader sense of institutions of humane learning, were still far in the future.

The third Order to be considered is that of the Augustinians. It must be understood that these were not the canons but the friars or hermits; the principal source drawn upon by da Silva Rêgo in vol XI of his *Documentação* is the work of Fr Manuel da Ave Maria, called the *Manual Eremitico*.<sup>119</sup>

The Augustinians began their work in Ormuz, from which the Jesuits had withdrawn. But in 1572 it was decided that a mission should be started in India. Twelve friars<sup>120</sup> set out from Lisbon on 18 March of that year, and arrived safe and sound in Goa on 3 September. They received many invitations to reside temporarily, until they had a house of their own; but that which pleased them most was the convent of the Observant Franciscans; here they stayed for three months, 'treated with such kindness that the gratitude of us Augustinians for this welcome will never die'. They then moved to a small convent, where they stayed until their own noble house was built, the foundation stone being laid by one of their own number, Alexis de Menezes, archbishop of Goa. Naturally the favour of Menezes gave the Augustinians a special place in the society of Goa; but even without this aid their own virtues had produced a favourable impression on all about them.

One of the most notable achievements of the Augustinian Archbishop de Menezes was the creation of the first religious sisterhood in India. There had been various proposals for such a community, but these had all been refused by the king of Portugal on the ground that Goa was 'a land of soldiers and of licentious people, in which it would be impossible to maintain the reverence due to these venerable ladies'. Later documents suggest a different reason. As the king saw things, the first and most important duty of ladies of pure Portuguese or of mixed origin was to contribute in the most practical way possible to the increase of the Christian population of the colony. The last thing that he wanted was such a measure of population control as would be achieved by the withdrawal of a number of



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these ladies into the celibate life through joining such a sisterhood.

The masterful will of Menezes broke through all obstacles, and in 1606 the sisterhood of St Monica came into being, for sisters of the order of St Augustine, to be under the jurisdiction of the archbishop and to be cared for spiritually by one of the Augustinian brothers. There was no lack of applicants; twenty-five sisters were admitted in the first year, and the splendid building which grew up was planned to house no less than a hundred and fifty.<sup>121</sup> The conduct of the first sisters was entirely satisfactory to both the civil and ecclesiastical authorities; a slightly later report bears witness to them as being of notable sincerity and great recollection. But the force of authority was still against them. The desire of the Franciscans to have a convent of Poor Clares never met with approval. More than two hundred years were to pass before the Roman Catholic church came to realise the great part that religious women could play in the evangelistic and pastoral work of the church in India.<sup>122</sup>

Most of the work of the Augustinians was carried on in Goa. But they also found an outlet in a distant and much more dangerous setting. A number of Portuguese were living in lower Bengal, with their main centre at the river port of Hūglī. Many of these belonged to the riff-raff of European society in Asia – deserters from the Portuguese army, criminals who had escaped from the claws of justice, speculators anxious to make a fortune quickly, adventurers living in the hope and expectation that something would turn up, pirates or the allies of pirates. Mere distance made certain that the area would be beyond the reach of Portuguese justice and effective control. The Jesuits and the Dominicans had both tried their hands in this highly unpromising field, and had withdrawn with the feeling that nothing could be done. Just at the end of the century, in 1599, the Augustinians came in and held the fort with rather greater success.

They did complain bitterly of the hardness of their lot and of the unpromising situation in which they had to work. The character of the Europeans was not their only trial; Muslims were everywhere, with their hand against every man and ready at any time to disturb the public peace. Access to the higher Hindu castes was almost impossible, and conversions on that level of society were very few indeed. Most of the work was done among Europeans and slaves. And yet within a few years the missionaries were able to report 10,000 converts, with the expectation of greater progress in the new century that was just about to open.<sup>123</sup>

At the beginning of the seventeenth century the Benedictines made an abortive attempt to enter the Indian field. In 1604 Benedictine Fathers came to Goa to explore the possibilities of starting missionary work in India. But the archbishop (Menezes) and the viceroy were against the idea; the Benedictines were told that the missionary forces already engaged in India

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were sufficient to meet the needs of the work, and that their order was not suited for work in India. So no more came of this initiative.<sup>124</sup>

In the year 1605 by far the greater part of the population of India had never heard of Christianity and had no idea that such a religion existed. Yet the Christians were staking out their claims in a variety of directions, making it plain that in spite of many reverses they intended to stay, strong in the conviction that what they held to be the truth would in the end prevail and that the darkness of centuries would be brought to an end by the penetration of the light of Christ.

## Conclusion · To What Did it All Amount?

When Vasco da Gama completed the long voyage from Lisbon and anchored in the roadstead not far from Calicut, he inaugurated a new epoch in the history of the world. India had been drawn out of the isolation of centuries, and brought willy-nilly within reach of the waves of power that were spreading out in all directions from the Western world.

Opinions vary greatly as to the effects of this change on the life of India. In the post-colonial era there has been a tendency for Indian writers to see nothing good in the colonial period, to pillory all the forces of destruction that were at work, to overlook everything on which a more favourable interpretation could be placed, and to hold that India endured for four and a half centuries a dark night of the soul and suffered wounds of the spirit which are only now beginning slowly to heal.

K.M. Panikkar may be taken as a fair representative of this school of thought and writing. In his book *Malabar and the Portuguese*, he has hardly a good word to say for the Portuguese. He is concerned to minimise their achievements, and to prick the bubble of arrogance which supposes that the Portuguese had a great empire in India: 'From the earliest times they showed themselves to be corrupt, inefficient and altogether unfit for the art of government. The Portuguese soldiers were certainly brave and cared little for life. Some of their leaders were chivalrous and honourable men; but few are the names in Portuguese history that could add to the military glory of Portugal.'<sup>1</sup>

Even if it be admitted that in some areas, such as the introduction of new crops and plants and the creation of schools and colleges, the Portuguese connection was of some benefit to India, these benefits were limited in scope, and the price paid for them may be judged to have been too high: 'Even accepting that the connection with Europe has been beneficial to India, it is open to doubt whether a century and a half of barbarous outrage, of unscrupulous plunder and of barren aggression is not too great a price to pay for the doubtful benefit of having the way opened for other European traders.'<sup>2</sup>

An even harsher verdict has been passed by a more recent writer, C.O.A.

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Vasudevan, in whose eyes the whole movement of European expansion was simply 'a tide of barbarism identical in every respect to (though greater in magnitude than) all the earlier ones recorded in human history'.<sup>3</sup> No mitigation of sentence in any particular is permitted:

*Difference between the European and earlier barbarians.* The early modern European enjoyed a higher level of material culture than the earlier barbarians of history like the Huns and the Vandals (I must emphasise the word material; morally he stood demonstrably lower). He had fire-arms, the printing press, the mariner's compass and a rudimentary understanding of astronomy, all acquired through his contacts with Asia. In short he exhibited all those advantages that a sixteenth century barbarian may be expected to show over his fifth century ancestor. The difference between them was really *the difference between the 16th century and the fifth*; but historians tended to regard it as that between civilisation and barbarism.<sup>4</sup>

A passage such as the above is the product of a highly selective method of studying and writing history. The choice of the term 'barbarian' is singularly unfortunate, since all history shows that those who call others barbarians will themselves in turn be called barbarians by those whom they have thus stigmatised. The story of the contacts between West and East in India is complex, and nothing is gained by pretending that it is simpler than it is.

The recovery of Europe from the devastation wrought by invaders from central Asia, the forerunners of the Mughuls, and later by the Islamic invasions, was a slow and uncertain business. The first renaissance in the eleventh century was followed by the amazing blossoming of the European genius in the thirteenth century, in Giotto and Dante, in Francis of Assisi and Thomas of Aquino, in the angel choir at Lincoln, in countless other manifestations of supreme creativity. This intellectual and artistic explosion led to the spirit of eager inquiry, one manifestation of which was worldwide exploration, and this in its turn led on to the domination of the known world by the European powers. It happened that Portugal was the first Western power to make contact with Asia by the sea-route. But it is probable that, even if the Portuguese had never stirred from home, others would have entered in. The opening up of India to European influence, and the consequent extension of Asian influence to Europe, are among that class of events in relation to which the term 'inevitable' may not inappropriately be used.

When the Portuguese reached India, it was impossible that they should detach themselves from points of view which they had come to adopt in the European situation. For eight centuries before the sea-route to India was opened up, they had been profoundly influenced by the other missionary religion with which they were acquainted – Islam. In the Islamic world

there is no doubt as to the position and the duties of the ruler. He has been appointed by God to promote the interests of the one true religion, and this means bringing all men everywhere within the fold of Islam. The extent to which Islam has been propagated by the sword has been exaggerated by Christian writers. But the Christian in a Muslim country knows well that he can never hope to attain equality of citizen rights; he can never be more than a protected person, protected largely because of his usefulness as a taxpayer. Moreover, as the history of the Coptic church in Egypt over many centuries has shewn, there is constant pressure on the promising young men of the Christian community to recognise that no appropriate career is open to them if they remain Christians, whereas, if they become Muslims, at once every avenue is accessible to them. This process of attrition can be seen in full activity in mainly Muslim countries such as Sabah, in which Muslim religious propaganda is backed up by strenuous efforts on the part of the government to make it effective.

If a Christian does accept the Muslim faith, he will be expected at once to adopt a Muslim name, to be circumcised, to wear Muslim dress, and at every single point to adapt himself to the usages and demands of his new faith. He will say his prayers in Arabic and not in his own language. He will no longer bear any close resemblance to Hindu, Christian or pagan. It is not surprising that the Portuguese, with this long-standing example before them, supposed that Portugalisation was a necessary accompaniment of acceptance of the Christian faith in India.

Modern ideas of the separation of church and state were unknown in the medieval world. Portuguese missionaries assumed that the propagation of the Christian faith was one of the duties incumbent upon the Christian ruler. They expected the king to make provision for them financially, and to lend all the support of the secular arm to their religious work. This association was unquestionably harmful to the Christian cause in India. Even to this day it is difficult for Hindus to understand the Christian church as Christians understand it – as a purely spiritual body independent of every secular power, tolerant in the sense that everyone is free to join it, and everyone is free to leave if his conscience so directs; but intolerant in making the same claim as is made by Hindus and Muslims to the possession of a superior and final revelation of the truth.

It is against the background of such prejudices and ideas that we have to estimate the success of Portuguese missionary work, and the extent to which India had become aware of a new and dynamic religious force at work in Indian society.

It may be argued that that enterprise which was outwardly the least successful was in reality the most successful of all. By the time of the death of Akbar the Jesuits were well established at the court of the great Mogul.

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They were accustomed to move on terms of courteous intimacy with the great ones of the land, and even with the emperor himself, and were treated by all with respect and even with deference. Communications in India in the days of Akbar were probably as good as at any time before the building of railways in the nineteenth century. To the emperor's court information flowed in from all parts of the empire and beyond; from that centre the grape-vine carried news and rumour to the furthest corner of his dominions. Thus it became known to a great many people that the Christian faith was not to be regarded as the superstition of a rabble of barbarians but was to be taken seriously, and that the Fathers, in their shabby dress and with their obvious lack of resources, were to be regarded as being at least on an equality with the holy men of the other great religions of India.

In Mogor the Jesuits were guests. In Goa and other territories actually annexed by the Portuguese the situation was very different. By 1605 a considerable proportion of the population was Christian. Many of the Christians were of the third generation; they had forgotten the traditions of their fathers and owed such culture as they possessed to the church and to its schools. Many were poor, but an increasing number held good positions, and were accustomed to move with ease in the mixed society of the Portuguese settlements. A beginning had been made with the creation of an indigenous clergy. Everything, of course, was Western. Latin was to be to the Christian what Arabic was to the Muslim; the Portuguese had no more intention than the Muslim of departing from the principle of a single sacred language as a symbol of the worldwide unity of the faith. To this extent Christianity must be judged to have been, like Islam, an exotic in India. Yet just as Indian Islam is different from the Islam of Mecca, so in countless subtle ways Christianity was becoming Indian. This the Portuguese were inclined to regard as among their greatest achievements in their Indian territories.

When the Portuguese made contact with the Thomas Christians, they found themselves in a very different world. Here they had to do not with new converts but with a Christianity that was perhaps older than their own. The Thomas Christians, even when poor, have always retained something of an aristocratic temper. They were prepared to welcome the Portuguese as friends but never as superiors.

The Portuguese were slow to recognise these realities. For more than fifty years they supposed that they could Latinise the Thomas Christians. Some of the changes that they introduced were certainly of value to that long-isolated church, and were accepted. It soon became clear, however, that there was a limit to that acceptance. For centuries these Christians had worshipped in Syriac, of which they knew little; why should they be expected to worship in Latin, of which they knew nothing? Their reaction

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was the same as that of the Cornishmen, when confronted with the English Prayer Book of 1549. They won a notable victory over defeat when in 1599 they made their submission to the Roman Catholic church; this submission was made conditional on their being allowed to retain the Syriac liturgy, and a number of other usages which had grown up among them in the course of centuries.

The Portuguese had the good sense to accept these conditions, and the Thomas Christians were able to continue their existence as an unmistakably Eastern church. Later writers, however, have been inclined to wonder whether the advantages of association with Rome were not purchased at too high a price, and whether more of the ancient traditions might have been retained than the narrowness of the Portuguese at that time was prepared to permit.

The mass conversion of the fisher folk on the Coromandel Coast landed the Portuguese with yet a third type of Christianity, and an entirely new set of problems. The people lived scattered along a hundred miles of coastal territory; the efforts of thirty Jesuits would not have been sufficient to introduce them to all the intricacies of medieval Roman Catholicism. For years at a time Fr Henry Henriques was left alone to grapple with all the problems. All the Christians belonged to a single caste, and had therefore brought with them into the church all the complex structure of relationships, marriage customs and social organisation, as well as the superstitions characteristic of the lower levels of Hinduism. Yet by the end of the century the outlines of a church had begun to appear. The Paravas knew that they were Christians and had no intention of ever being anything else; they knew roughly what their Christian duties were, though they were not always very successful in carrying them out. The most important thing of all was that, in spite of the presence of some Western influences, they were unmistakably an Indian community. Their social structures remained much as they had always been; in appearance, dress and manners they were almost indistinguishable from those among their Hindu neighbours whose social status, though not their manner of gaining their living, was much the same as theirs.

Only when this variety of structures and of types of Christianisation is recognised is it possible to pass an objective judgement on the success or failure of Portuguese missionary effort.

The essentials of the debate can perhaps be conveniently summarised in two questions:

Was it clear by the end of the sixteenth century that the future of India and that of Europe were inescapably linked with one another? To this question the answer must be an unhesitating 'Yes'.

Was it by that time clear that not only in the Serra but outside it

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Christianity had come to stay, and was gradually taking on the lineaments of an Indian religion? Once again there can be no doubt as to the answer; it is writ large in the subsequent history of India.

So much for the achievements of Portugal in that first century of discovery and contact. But the effect of what had happened in some narrow and mainly coastal areas must not be exaggerated. The vast majority of the population of India had never heard of Jesus Christ or of the Christian faith. They were unaware that any new force had been let loose upon their country, and continued to live their lives as they had always lived them. Over vast areas of India Hindu and Muslim continued to act and to worship according to their ancient patterns without so much as a ripple to disturb their calm, and without any awareness that anything had happened which might one day present itself as a threat to their established ways. Many things had to happen before the Christian faith could become a matter of wide-spread concern in India, and before its influence could spread beyond the limits of small communities still largely dependent on the West.



## PART THREE

# II · India in the Seventeenth Century

### I JAHĀNGĪR

In the course of the seventeenth century only three Mughul emperors held dominion in India – Jahāngīr, Shāh Jahān and Aurungzīb. Such continuity is unusual in the history of any country. None of the three was the equal of Akbar in character or statecraft, yet each was far above the average in ability. Stability at the top helped to maintain stability in the vast fabric of the empire. About the middle of the century the Mughul empire attained to its widest extent, to the height of its power, and probably to the highest level of its prosperity. By the time of the death of Aurungzīb decline had become observable and was to become irreversible. It may be thought that no power on earth could have stayed the decline once it had set in. In an age in which communications between different parts of the empire were still so slow, neither diligence nor genius on a higher level than was available could have held together in peace and unity peoples of so many different races, and adherents of such a variety of religions.

When Akbar died the question of the succession to the throne was settled with less than the usual difficulties. Prince Salīm had been in revolt against his father, and had mortally offended him by the assassination of his favourite Abu'l Fazl (19 August 1602); but before the end father and son had been at least outwardly reconciled. Akbar on his deathbed, when already beyond the power of speech, had indicated to his son that he should place the imperial turban on his head, and gird himself with the sword of Humāyūn. The word of Akbar still ruled from beyond the grave; opposition to the accession of Salīm almost immediately died away. At the time of his ascending the throne he was thirty-six years old.

Many in the empire looked anxiously to discern signs of the religious policy that the new ruler intended to follow. The activities of Akbar in this field had left many of his Muslim subjects in a state of considerable perturbation. Shī'ahs in large numbers had entered the country, and had been received with marked favour. Orthodox scholars and pious conservatives, loyal to every detail of the Sunnī faith, felt that their religious position

had been gravely undermined. They looked eagerly to the new emperor to put things right. If their hopes were not entirely fulfilled, their fears were to a large extent allayed. The first act of Salīm after his accession was to announce the names by which he was to be known – Jahāngīr, upholder of the world, and Nūr-ud-Dīn, light of the faith. This choice of names gave to the anxious Muslims confidence that Salīm would remain a Muslim, and that under his rule the rights of Muslims would be maintained without derogation.

Jahāngīr, however, was by no means a fanatic. If less convinced than Akbar of the virtues of universal toleration, he was concerned for the welfare of all his peoples, and seems genuinely to have desired that there should be freedom of faith for men of varied convictions. Though the majority of those holding high office came from among the ranks of the Muslims, Hindus continued to be appointed to posts of considerable importance. It was noted that, of forty-seven *mansabdārs* (imperial officials) of the highest rank, six were Hindus.<sup>1</sup>

Jahāngīr has been accused of persecuting the Sikhs, a body always liable to cause trouble even to a tolerant government. It was unfortunate that the fifth Sikh *gurū* Arjun had been drawn into sympathy with the rebellious prince Khusrav and had given him Rs. 5,000. For this he was summoned to Lahore and ordered to pay a fine of two lakhs of rupees. When he refused to pay, Jahāngīr, in his own words, 'issued instructions that he should be put to death by torture'. This was no time to make enemies; Jahāngīr, in whom as in so many of the Tīmūrīds there was a streak of cruelty, ought to have known that this action would never be forgiven. But it would be unfair to regard this as persecution of the Sikhs as a religious body. A temperate Indian historian has written that 'without minimizing the gravity of Jahāngīr's mistake, it is only fair to recognise that the whole affair amounts to a single execution due primarily to political reasons. No other Sikhs were molested. No interdict was laid on the Sikh faith. Gurū Arjun would have ended his days in peace if he had not espoused the cause of a rebel.'<sup>2</sup>

There are on record a few, but only a few, cases of the destruction of Hindu temples. Christians seem to have enjoyed the same toleration as had been granted to them by Akbar. Jahāngīr wished to maintain the friendly contacts which he had had with the Jesuit Fathers in the days before his accession.

The twelve principles of government which he had laid down for himself, and which he records in his diary, breathe a humane and kindly spirit. No doubt government was not always carried out in accordance with these principles, but the emperor should be given credit for the excellence of his intentions.<sup>3</sup>

The situation of the empire, though less precarious than it had been at the

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accession of Akbar, was by no means unthreatened by danger. The Shah of Persia was an uncomfortable neighbour, always casting covetous glances at Kandahar. The South Indian kingdoms, though less vigorous than they had been, were restless and still untamed. The distant province of Bengal was hard to control, and often all too ready to house and protect rebels and usurpers. As a result, much of the reign of Jahāngīr, like that of his father Akbar, was taken up with wars and campaigns, which in themselves are neither very interesting nor very important. The story is too full of traitors and turn-coats for comfort. But, taken in the large, the reign of Jahāngīr manifests two qualities notable in Mughul rule – continuity and persistence – with the result that at the end of the reign the empire was considerably larger in extent and more stable than it had been at the beginning, in spite of Jahāngīr's indolence and disinclination for the military life which made it impossible for him to exercise more than a vague and distant control over the course of events.

Jahāngīr enjoyed to the full all the more sensual aspects of life. But these were very far from exhausting his interests. The spirit of Bābur revived in him, and manifested itself in a keen appreciation of natural beauty in many forms. He delighted especially in the spring flowers of Kashmir, and recorded carefully in his journal the flowers, birds and animals which he had seen, noting particularly those which were not to be found in India. He was both a connoisseur and a patron of the art of painting; the rapid development of Persian art, in its specifically Indian forms, owes not a little to his patronage. He never pretended unawareness of his own expertise in this field:

As regards myself, my liking for painting and my practice in judging it have arrived at such a point that, when any work is brought before me, either of deceased artists or of the present day, without the names being told me, I say on the spur of the moment that it is the work of such and such a man. And if there be a picture containing many portraits, and each face the work of a different master, I can discover which face is the work of each.<sup>4</sup>

The physical strength of Jahāngīr was early undermined by excess, especially in the use of alcohol, a habit of which he had tried hard but with only partial success to break himself. For a number of years he was saved from disaster by a singularly fortunate choice – in 1611 he married one of the most outstanding women of whom there is record in any period of Indian history – Mihr-un-Nisa (Sun of womankind), to whom the emperor gave the titles Nūr Mahall (light of the Palace) and Nūr Jahān (light of the world); this thirty-four year old widow, of the highest Persian extraction and of immense personal ability, retained the admiration and affection of the emperor for the remaining years of his life. Together with her father, her

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brother and her nephew, she formed a Persian quadrilateral of abilities, into the hands of which Jahāngīr was increasingly content to relinquish the direction of affairs.<sup>5</sup> This Persian clique saved the empire; the emperor they could not save. As age advanced (though he was only fifty-eight when he died) he sank ever deeper into lethargy, until even the pleasures to which he had so long been addicted failed to rouse him. After a last visit to Kashmir in 1627 he set out, a sick and weary man, to return to Lahore, but never reached it, dying on the way on 7 November of that year.

### 2 SHĀH JAHĀN

When Jahāngīr died, there was no doubt that he would be succeeded by his eldest surviving son, Khurram, on whom he had earlier conferred the title Shāh Jahān, lord of the world. The candidate had been quick to seize power, and to safeguard his position by the execution of all those male relations who might have caused him inconvenience as pretenders to the throne. All the principal officers of the army were on his side. His father-in-law, Āsaf Khān, the brother of Nūr Mahall, was the ablest statesman of the time.

Thirty-six years old at the time of his accession, Shāh Jahān was a man of wide experience, who had learned to control his own appetites and to keep his own counsel. Up to the age of twenty-four he had never tasted wine. That admirable observer Sir Thomas Roe has left a vivid picture of him:

I never saw so settled a countenance, nor any man keepe so constant a gravety, never smiling, nor in face showeing any respect or difference of men; but mingled with extreame pride and contempt of all. Yet I found some inward trouble now and then assaile him, and a kind of brokennes and distraction in his thoughts, unprovidedly and amasedly answering sutors, or not hearing.<sup>6</sup>

Shāh Jahān was a sincere Muslim, though not perhaps a very religious one. He was not to be led astray by the experiments of his grandfather or by the indifference of his father. It was his intention that the Sunnī way of life and worship should be maintained in its integrity, and on this he would admit of no compromise; but this does not mean that he was a persecutor, bent on the destruction of other forms of faith.

The emperor did at times decree the destruction of Hindu temples. Thus in 1633 orders were given for the destruction of temples in and near Benares, especially of those the construction of which had been begun during the previous reign. It is stated that in accordance with this decree seventy-six shrines were destroyed. Moreover orders were issued that no new shrines were to be constructed. But mosques were not erected on the sites of the Hindu shrines which had been eliminated. In 1634 intermarriage between Hindus and Muslims was prohibited. There are reports of mass conversions

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to Islam in a number of places. But Shāh Jahān was not a fanatic as was Aurungzīb. The judgement of a modern historian is that he did not go beyond 'the desire to maintain the strict tenets of Islam'.<sup>7</sup>

Sir Thomas Roe repeatedly reported of Shāh Jahān, before his accession, that he was a hater of Christians. Thus, on 10 October 1616, he writes that, 'if Sultan Corsoronne [Khusrav] prevayle in his right, this kingdome wilbe a sanctuary for Christians, whome he loves and honors . . . Yf the other wyne, we shalbe the loosers, for hee is most earnest in his superstition, a hater of all Christians, proud, subtill, false and barberously tyrannous.'<sup>8</sup> Roe was over-optimistic in his estimate of Khusrav, and less than fair to the future emperor. The latter had, indeed, an inveterate distrust of foreigners, but this was not so much on religious grounds as because he saw in them and their rivalries a threat to the tranquillity of his dominions.

If Shāh Jahān retained, after his accession, a good deal of this prejudice, he was not without reason for doing so. His contacts with Christians were overshadowed by one of the darkest episodes in the whole story of East-West relations during the Mughul period.

The Portuguese had spread themselves far beyond the power of Goa to control them. The further from Goa, the less reputable the conduct of the Christians tended to be. One of the main centres of disorder was the port town of Hūglī in the lower valley of the Ganges. Here Portuguese merchants, adventurers and criminals had settled and flourished, had multiplied through the purchase of slaves and miscegenation, and had established something like an empire of their own. They engaged in piracy far and near. It was their habit to kidnap or purchase Bengali children and to sell them as slaves. The emperor nursed a strong feeling of distaste for them because of their refusal to help him in the days of his rebellion against his father, the empress because two slave-girls of her own had been taken in possession by Portuguese who had refused to surrender them. It was clear that sooner or later this wasps' nest would have to be burned out.

The occasion came in 1632.<sup>9</sup> Priests in Dacca and Agra had warned the Portuguese of the danger of an attack. No credit was given to these warnings and few preparations were made for defence. Retribution was not long in coming. The governor Qāsim Khān assembled an army, and also boats on the river to make possible a combined assault by land and water. For a considerable time the defenders held out, partly by military action including many feats of notable gallantry, partly by negotiations with a view to obtaining reasonable terms from the assailants. In the end, seeing that the situation was hopeless, they decided to abandon the town and the defences and to make their way by boat down river. But, with the strange incompetence that marks every stage in this bizarre story, the Portuguese had miscalculated time and tide, and did not set off until the boats were

exposed to attack by the Mughul forces. Losses both of boats and of human lives were extremely heavy; but about 3,000 persons, the vast majority of whom were Indians, free or slave, managed to make their way through all the barriers and to reach the Saugor (Sāgar) island at the mouth of the Ganges, where they were safe from further depredations. But a considerable number were captured and condemned to a miserable journey to Agra, which lasted no less than eleven months, and in the course of which a large number of them died. It seems that about 400 survived all the hardships and reached Agra still alive.<sup>10</sup>

Considerable efforts were made to turn Christians among the captives into Muslims. Women and children, of course, had no choice. Some among the male adults no doubt yielded to pressure. But it seems that a considerable number remained firm in their faith; these were eventually released from captivity and allowed to settle in the neighbourhood of Agra.

The assaults directed against the virtue of the four priests who survived the horrors of the journey were grievous. They were whipped, paraded in ignominy through the streets, and then subjected to most rigorous imprisonment. The two seculars, Manuel Danhaya, and Manuel Garcia who was old and afflicted with gout, died in prison of the hard usage they had undergone. Of the Augustinians, Fr Francis of the Incarnation was sent to Goa to treat with the viceroy on terms for the release of the prisoners. Fr Antony of Christ endured nine years of incarceration, until at last he was released through influence exercised by Fr Manrique upon Āsaf Khān the father-in-law of the emperor.<sup>11</sup>

In these melancholy events relations between East and West, and between Christianity and the non-Christian faiths, reached perhaps their lowest point. It is difficult to feel much sympathy with the Portuguese who had behaved abominably, and whose conduct cast a stigma on the faith that they professed. But cruelty and oppression have a way of proving counter-productive, and of sowing the dragon's teeth of retaliation and vengeance.

Shāh Jahān did not inherit the speculative mind of Akbar, nor the advanced connoisseurship of Jahāngīr. The sense of beauty, which seems to have been characteristic of the Mughul imperial family, in him took the form of an acute appreciation of architecture and its possibilities; it was his aim to adorn his empire with great and notable buildings. The greatest personal tragedy of his life gave him the supreme opportunity to carry out this design in its noblest form. In 1612, as a man of twenty-one years, he had been married to a niece of the empress, Arjumand Bānū, to whom the name Mumtāz Mahall was given. Shāh Jahān as a good Muslim felt no vocation to monogamy, but no other woman played a comparable part in his life; for twenty years these two gave an example of conjugal felicity such as is rather rare in the annals of the Mughuls. Her death in 1632 was a sorrow from

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which her husband never fully recovered. The result of his passionate desire to make her memory immortal was the Tāj Mahal at Agra.

The Tāj has been so often described that no more is needed here than a reference to it. But it is to be noted that the great complex of buildings which we have is only half of what the emperor had planned. It was his intention to balance the Tāj by a corresponding building in black marble on the other side of the river, and so to provide a worthy mausoleum for himself. This second building was never completed; imagination alone can communicate to us the grandeur of the emperor's concept of what was a fitting memorial to love and majesty.<sup>12</sup>

The Mughuls were still foreigners, and the influence of Persia continued to be strong in all their affairs. But by now they had been in India so long that the foreignness was much less felt than it had been in the sixteenth century, and there was much to show that the Indian spirit was still alive. Persian continued to be the language of the court and of polite literature. But one of the interesting features of the reign of Shāh Jahān is the reappearance of writing in the Indian languages, and, as so often in the history of India, in connection with a revival of indigenous religious interest. Prān Nāth wrote in Hindī with an admixture of Arabic and Persian words, and like Gurū Nānak and many another before and after him tried to reconcile Islam with Hinduism. Dādū Dayal of Ahmadābād (1544-1603) writer of many hymns, still has his followers the Dādūpanthis.<sup>13</sup> Far more important than either was Tukārām (1608-49), who composed poetry in Marāthī, and whose songs became widely known and sung.

What we find in his poems, as so often in the history of Hinduism, is not so much the desire to make proselytes, as to give expression to his own religious experiences, his personal zeal, the feeling of unworthiness and inadequacy, his own humility and piety, his fear of arrogance as it becomes clear to him that his work is being attended with success.<sup>14</sup>

Tukārām, like many other Indian reformers, lacked the gifts necessary for the working out of a consistent philosophy; he stands in the true succession of Indian *bhakti*, monotheistic in as much as only one God is worshipped, though without the dogmatic monotheism of Islam. 'I seek no knowledge of Brahman, no identity with him. Assure me that you are my god, and that I am your worshipper; I will embrace you, and continually behold your holy and blessed face.'<sup>15</sup>

It is possible but unlikely that Christian influence is to be found in the work of Tukārām and others of his type. They are to some extent influenced by Islam, but more in the way of reaction than of adaptation. Hinduism can take into itself something of Islam, in order to remain more than ever before its own true self, and to present a more strongly resistant front to Islam.

Tukārām and other reformers give evidence of the survival power of Hinduism, and of the range and variety of religious experience in that Mughul empire in which the Jesuit missionaries felt themselves constrained to bear witness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

The last years of Shāh Jahān were embittered by the family quarrels which were endemic in the family of Babur. Many years before the end, his third son Aurungzīb had decided in his own mind who was to be the next Mughul emperor, and moved towards his goal with an implacable energy which might better have served a worthier cause. In 1657 the ambitious prince was in the Deccan. Moving north in that year, by superior military skill and mobility he had defeated all the armies which could be mobilised against him; his three brothers had been eliminated and his father was a prisoner in his hands. Shāh Jahān was harshly, but not cruelly, treated. He was permitted to enjoy the tender care lavished on him by his eldest daughter Jahānāra, 'the Indian Antigone'. An historian tells us that 'all the ex-emperor's time was divided between (professing) obedience to God, prayer, performance of the obligatory religious services, reading the Qur'ān . . . or listening to the histories of the great men of the past'.<sup>16</sup> But seven and a half years of captivity passed tediously away, and it is unlikely that the captive ever became reconciled to the loss of power and liberty.

### 3 AURUNGZĪB

With the accession of Aurungzīb we enter on a new period in the religious history of India. For six centuries Muslim conquerors had been carrying out various acts of aggression against Hinduism; but these, though sometimes cruel, had been sporadic rather than systematic. Aurungzīb was not a man for half-measures. He took seriously the injunction of the Koran that it is the duty of every Muslim to 'exercise himself in the path of God'; this meant that to him the exercise of power meant the opportunity of destroying everything that was contrary to the will of God as he understood it, and to the teaching of Islam.<sup>17</sup>

On 16 April 1669 the emperor issued a general order for the destruction of Hindu temples and schools, and for the overthrow of Hindu practice and worship. No one knows how many temples were destroyed, but there is no doubt that the orders were extensively carried out. The famous temples of Somnāth, of Viśvanāth at Benares, and of Keśav Dev at Mathurā were destroyed.

A further enactment of 1679 affected, or threatened, the livelihood of every single non-Muslim in the country. Just a century earlier, in 1579, Akbar had abolished the *jizya*, the tax imposed on non-Muslims who would not embrace the faith.<sup>18</sup> The tax was no doubt economically productive, but



it was intended also as a sign of subjection and inferiority, and as such was bitterly resented by the Hindus. There were, in point of fact, many exceptions, as for slaves, beggars and paupers, blind men and cripples. But the burden fell heavily on the poor, especially as the police had orders to chastise those who did not promptly pay what was due. Manucci tells us that 'many Hindus who were unable to pay turned Muhammadans to obtain relief from the insults of the collectors'.<sup>19</sup>

In 1671 the emperor followed up earlier decrees with the order that Hindu revenue collectors, head clerks and accountants were to be dismissed and replaced by Muslims. Like the Portuguese before him, Aurungzīb found that this order simply could not be put into effect – there were not enough competent Muslims to fill the places that had been rendered vacant. But many Hindus lost their jobs for no other reason than that they were Hindus.

So vast a religious revolution could not be imposed even upon a docile population without arousing a measure of violent opposition. Of the many revolts that occurred, one can be classed as almost wholly religious; in another the beginnings of what may be called Hindu nationalism make themselves manifest.

The Mughuls did not look with favour on the Sikh movement, having perhaps detected that what had begun as a religious community was in process of being transformed into a military brotherhood. The execution of the fifth Sikh *Gurū* by Jahāngīr may be written off as a single act of tyranny. Under Aurungzīb hostility between the Sikhs and the Muslims became endemic and inveterate. In 1664, after a period of grave dissensions which threatened to destroy the unity of the movement, Tegh Bahādur, the youngest son of the sixth *Gurū*, managed to establish himself as the ninth *Gurū*, and before long found himself in opposition to the policy of the emperor. The order to destroy temples had been extended from Hindu to Sikh places of worship. Tegh Bahādur encouraged the Hindus of Kashmir to resist, and also organised the defiant opposition of the Sikhs. Apprehended and ordered to embrace Islam, he endured torture for five days, and was then beheaded (December 1675) by direct order of the emperor.

Retribution was swift and effective. Govind Singh, the son and successor of Tegh Bahādur, and also the last in the series of Sikh *Gurūs*, was not the man to lie down under such high-handed persecution. By the time of his death in 1708 the transformation of the Sikh community was complete. The religious element was maintained, as it has been to this day; but the Sikhs had been welded together into a highly trained and close-knit military democracy, a nation with imperial ambitions and animated by intense hostility to Mughul rule and to the Islamic faith. 'It was as if Cromwell's Ironsides were inspired by the Jesuits' unquestioning submission to their

Superior's decisions on moral problems.'<sup>20</sup> This centralised and dynamic organisation has yielded some converts to the Christian faith, but, as compared even with Islam, a very small number.<sup>21</sup>

The Sikhs were wasps; the Hindus were hornets. In modern Hindu tradition Śivāji has undergone apotheosis as the incarnation of all Hindu virtues and as the enduring symbol of Hindu national and religious pride. It is possible that his character was less perfect than has been supposed by his admirers, and that his achievements were not quite as great as they have been represented in mythological interpretations of history. But few would deny that to him, more than to any other man, was due the revival of the Hindu spirit and the growing awareness that the Mughul power was not unconquerable. The day of the Marāthās had dawned.

Śivāji (1627–80) had risen from not very eminent origins; but by courage, persistence and inventiveness, not unmixed with diplomatic skill and guile, he had made himself the unquestioned leader of the Marāthās. The Marāthā soldiery were capable, when necessary, of giving a good account of themselves in set battles of the traditional type; but throughout these years of conflict their strength lay in mobility, and their most characteristic form of warfare was the bold and adventurous raid even into territories distant from their base. The heavy armies of the Mughuls often showed themselves helpless in face of these unfamiliar tactics.

On the death of his father in 1664 Śivāji assumed the title of rājā, to which he was entitled rather by conquest than by heredity. On 16 June at Raigarh he crowned himself *chhatrapati*, 'king of kings', a direct challenge to Mughul authority, but not wholly unjustified in view of the immense territory which by that date was subject to Marāthā rule. At the full extent of his power his dominion stretched from sea to sea, covered a large part of the Deccan, and extended as far as the kingdom of Thaṅjāvur in the Carnatic. Even his principal adversary Aurungzīb was fain to admit that the one whom in earlier days he had contemptuously described as 'the mountain rat' had shewn himself a military genius of a high order. It was a Muslim historian Khafi Khān who added the tribute that, when Muslim women and children fell into his hands, he guarded them against ill-treatment and dishonour. In marked contrast to Aurungzīb he showed respect and tolerance for religions of every kind.<sup>22</sup>

When Śivāji died (24 March 1680), he left no successor who could be compared with him in military or diplomatic skill. So his great dream of a Hindu empire to replace that of the Muslims was never realised. Fate decreed that the vacuum left by the failure of Mughul power should be filled not by the Marāthās, the champions of the Hindu tradition, but by a western and at least nominally Christian power. But the veneration in which the memory of Śivāji has been held was not undeserved. A European historian

has well summarised the nature of the legacy which he left to his people: 'The territories and treasures which Shivājī acquired were not so formidable to the Muhammadans as the example he had set, the system and habits he had introduced, and the spirit he had infused into a large part of the Mahratta people.'<sup>23</sup>

Aurungzīb had many virtues as a ruler. He was a devotee in the rather narrow form of Islam which he had embraced, and was therefore regarded by his Muslim subjects as a saint. His private life was almost ascetic, and unstained by the vices which had weakened the hold on life of Jahāngīr and Shāh Jahān. He valued culture and was himself widely read in Persian and Arabic literature. Until the very end of his life he manifested unwearied diligence in administration. But his very virtues by excess transformed themselves into vices. The narrowness of his religious devotion turned him into a persecutor, and this undermined the loyalty to the Mughul throne which he had tried in other ways to foster. His administrative zeal led to undue centralisation. Aurungzīb had something of the temperament of an admirable head clerk. No detail was too small to engage his attention, no enterprise so remote from the centre as to be free from his detailed supervision. This meant that a sense of responsibility, even in his highest functionaries, was at a discount, and initiative was stilled. Out of apparent strength weakness was born. 'He never realised that there cannot be a great empire without a great people.'<sup>24</sup>

#### 4 THE ARRIVAL OF THE EUROPEANS: THE DUTCH

To the outward eye, the greatest events of the seventeenth century in India were those connected with the rise of Hindu feeling and Hindu power. The reality, however, was very different. The major factor leading to revolutionary change, though no one could have realised this at the time, was the steady encroachment of the European powers on the Indian scene, and the establishment of enclaves which made it plain that these foreigners intended to stay. Their small settlements were significant not because of what they were but because of what they portended.

First in the field were the Dutch. W.H. Moreland is correct in writing that 'the English were merely following a road already trodden by their predecessors' feet', and that 'It was the Dutch and not the English who succeeded to the Portuguese mastery of the Asiatic seas, and for the greater part of a century it was the Dutch who took the largest share of the external commerce of India.'<sup>25</sup> The Portuguese had come to India with the express intention of driving the Arabs from the seas. The Dutch came with the similar intention of serving the Portuguese as the Portuguese had served the Arabs. It is not hard to account for this hostility. For a number of years

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the crowns of Spain and Portugal had been united. The Dutch in their homeland had suffered unspeakable things at the hands of Spain. It is not surprising that, religious antipathies being combined with commercial rivalry, they should carry into Asian waters many of the resentments hatched in the West, and that they should regard it as a work highly pleasing to almighty God to eliminate Portuguese power and popery from the Asian scene. They had no particular interest in conquering Indians; they had clear ideas about overcoming and expelling the Portuguese.

The story of the Dutch advance in the East is one of steady pressure and almost unbroken success. For this there were several reasons. The Portuguese had for a time held the pre-eminence in seamanship but those days were now past. The Dutch, with a new skill and nimbleness in the management of their craft, looked with a good deal of contempt on the heavy manoeuvrings of the Portuguese ships which at almost every point they could outmanoeuvre and outsail. The Portuguese were beginning to experience the lassitude of long possession, and, perhaps from the infiltration of Indian blood into their veins, had lost something of the vigour with which they first came to India. The Dutch, also representatives of a small nation, came in with all the exuberance and enthusiasm of a sturdy race, entering upon new and unpredictable adventures, and with that dogged persistence which had ensured their survival against the massed forces of the Roman Catholic powers.

From the start the Dutch had had their eyes fixed not so much on India as on the Moluccas, and on the immensely profitable trade in cloves and nutmeg and the other spices which grew to perfection in what is now called Indonesia. India was to them a port of call on the way to the richer lands of the east. The first foundation of the Dutch empire in those parts was laid when in 1619 Jan Pietersoon Coen started the building of the great city of Batavia on the ruins of Djakarta. Dutch supremacy in those regions was assured by the reduction in 1641 of Malacca, the possession of which gave them control of the main sea-route to the Far East.

The English had also begun to penetrate this region. The Dutch early resolved to make plain to them that their presence was unwelcome. This hostility found expression in the disastrous massacre of Amboina in 1623, when ten members of the English settlement with a number of their subordinates were arrested on a fantastic and baseless charge of conspiracy to take possession of the fortress, tortured, and after a mockery of a trial, executed.<sup>26</sup> In 1654 reparations were made to the relatives of those who had been unjustly executed in 1623. But the resentments kindled by this disgraceful affair died hard, and relations between Dutch and English in the east never fully recovered from the injury dealt them at that time. For the moment, however, the Dutch had reason to be satisfied with their

## *The Dutch*

achievement; the English never again challenged Dutch supremacy in the further regions, though the time was to come when they would take over all the Dutch possessions in continental India.<sup>27</sup>

The attention of the Dutch had early been attracted to Ceylon, not only because of the value of the trade in cinnamon of which the island was the centre, but also because from the ports of Trincomalee and Colombo it would be possible to control the sea-routes from the Arabian Sea to the Bay of Bengal, and so to isolate Goa from the Portuguese fortresses further east. The Dutch were not in a hurry. Though operations against Ceylon began in 1636, Colombo was not finally reduced till May 1656.

The west coast of India presented less attraction than the coast of Coromandel, where Fort Geldria at Pulicat had been built as early as 1613. There was no point in capturing Goa; all that was needed was to blockade and paralyse it, and this was effected by the building of a fort at Vengurla, as a base for the ships which would invest Goa during the months in which it was accessible to ships from the West. The trade in pepper was, however, also an attraction, though quantities of good pepper were available from Sumatra. So, once Colombo had been secured, plans were set on foot to round off the Dutch possessions by expelling the Portuguese from the coast of Malabar. In October 1661 Quilon was captured, and early in 1662 Cranganore, which offered unexpectedly fierce resistance. The fate of Cochin could not be long delayed. The first assault of the Dutch was ineffectual, and here too the resistance was well and skilfully maintained; but by January 1663 the Dutch soldiers were in the city, and surrender inevitably followed. A century and a half of Portuguese dominion was at an end; from now on the fortunes of Christians in the whole region were intimately involved in the policies and successes of the new masters.

The primary purpose of the Dutch was to develop commerce. Of all the Western traders in the East they were perhaps the most skilful and the most successful. Like all their rivals they were faced by the problem that few of the products of the West were desired in the East. Like all others in that mercantile age they were averse from the transfer of gold and silver in large quantities from the metropolis to the partners in trade. The solution was found in the development of extremely active commerce between the eastern parts of India and the still powerful indigenous kingdoms further east. The production of textiles in which India excelled was fostered and improved by the Dutch; careful study was made of the patterns and designs which would most attract the indigenous beauties from Achin in northern Sumatra to the confines of Australia. From their main centre at Nāgapaṭṭinam (Negapatam) the Dutch sent out shipload after shipload to the eastern islands. Indian textiles would admirably pay for Indonesian spices.

The record of the Dutch in India was on the whole much better than that

of the Portuguese. Always few in numbers, they had no aspirations in the direction of territorial acquisitions outside the Portuguese forts which they captured and occupied. They generally managed to remain on good terms with the Indian rulers on whose goodwill they depended for the safety and prosperity of their inland trade. Their hostility to the Portuguese was not extended to Roman Catholics of other nations, and Indians adhering to that church found the Dutch on the whole friendly protectors, though with a tendency to interfere too much in what were properly the affairs of the church.<sup>28</sup> In their dealings with Hindus and Muslims, they tended to follow the policy, adhered to also by the British, of non-interference. Their interest in the conversion of those of other faiths was languid rather than intense; they nowhere aroused such hostility as was occasioned by the aggressive methods of the Portuguese.

#### 5 THE ARRIVAL OF THE EUROPEANS: THE ENGLISH

The arrival of the English in India was almost contemporaneous with that of the Dutch. But there were extensive differences between the policies followed by the two powers. England in Europe had long been allied with Portugal, 'our oldest ally'. English and Portuguese were united in a common dislike of the Spaniards. This being so, the English felt no mission to eject the Portuguese from their possessions and were prepared to co-exist with them on friendly terms. Their only desire in India was to be allowed to exist, and to have reasonably secure and favourable conditions for trade. Till the end of the seventeenth century they were occupied with little else.

This is not to say that all was easy in the relations between the two nations. The Portuguese were jealous guardians of the monopoly of trade which they claimed, and were not at all anxious to see competitors installed in the favour of the Indian authorities. At all times the English had to face Portuguese opposition to their plans for entry.<sup>29</sup>

At first all seemed to go well for the British. In 1609 William Hawkins succeeded in making his way to Agra and was received with exceptional favour by the emperor Jahāngīr. But the timidity of the Indian merchants in Surat, overawed by the presence of the Portuguese, worked against his purposes, and he had to withdraw without securing confirmation of the desired permission to reside and to trade.

The first formally accredited ambassador of England in India, Sir Thomas Roe, arrived in Ajmer, where the court was at that time residing, in 1616. Roe was an admirable man, dignified, temperate, deeply religious, concerned at all times to maintain the honour of the nation, but courteous and considerate in all his dealing with Indians. There was, however, a basic weakness in his position. The king of England and the Great Mogul had very different ideas as to the nature of commercial treaties. Jahāngīr was

familiar with military alliances. He saw no particular reason why he should enter into an alliance on equal terms with a distant sovereign of the extent of whose power he had little idea, and who had nothing to offer worthy of his consideration. Permission to reside and trade might be granted, but only as a concession to suppliants, and in view of some advantage offered to the emperor.<sup>30</sup> Roe, in consequence, had to endure many frustrations, and in the end was not successful in obtaining all that he had come to gain. He was, however, able to reach an agreement with Prince Khurram (later the emperor Shāh Jahān) who was at that time governor of Gujarāt; under this agreement most of the desired privileges were secured to the English, and it was recognised that they had come to stay. Before Roe left India, factories had been established in Surat, Agra, Ahmadābād and Bharuch (Broach).<sup>31</sup>

The British were in; but their progress, far from being a steady rise to prosperity, was marked by a series of almost ridiculous set-backs. So far were the British from being at that time a conquering power that, as late as 1688, the factors at Surat were seized and imprisoned by the local Mughul authority.<sup>32</sup> On another occasion, in reprisal for the depredations of the English pirates in Indian waters, all the factors at Surat and Bharuch were arrested and kept in prison for a considerable period.<sup>33</sup>

An unexpected piece of good fortune saved the English from many of their perplexities. When in 1661 King Charles II of England sought in marriage the hand of a Portuguese princess Catharine of Braganza, the Portuguese included in the dowry the island of Bombay, in the hope that the English would guarantee the security of the Portuguese possessions in the East against the Dutch. The royal power was in no position to give any such guarantee; the wise decision was made to hand Bombay over to the East India Company at a quit rent of £10 a year. It is probable that the royal authorities did not realise what they were surrendering, and that the Company did not recognise the value of what it was acquiring; the greatness of Bombay was to develop only in the nineteenth century. But to possess a territory of its own within the limits of Mughul rule gave to the Company a status and a security which had previously been lacking. In 1687 the headquarters of the Company in western India were moved from Surat to Bombay.

We have noted the tendency of weavers and others to leave Goa and to move to Bombay, where they hoped that they would be able to carry on their avocations in greater peace and freedom than under the Portuguese. Before many years had passed the Company found itself responsible for the care and government of a population of 60,000.<sup>34</sup> English rule in the East, as in the England of that day, was harsh, discipline being maintained by frequent application of the lash to both men and women.<sup>35</sup> This hardly justifies the kind words of a modern historian about the 'mild and impartial rule of the English';<sup>36</sup> but certainly British rule was less capricious than that of the

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neighbouring Indian rulers and less severe than that of the Portuguese. It may be that the merchants and others who flocked to Bombay were well advised to jump out of the fire into the frying-pan.

English power established itself earlier and more rapidly in South India than in the west. The main centre of the Company had been at Machilipatnam (Masulipatam), 1611. But both political and commercial considerations led to the search for a centre further south. A lucky chance enabled the Company, by a deal with one of the local rulers, to secure in 1639 possession of the small town of Madraspatnam (otherwise known as Chennapatnam) together with permission, unusual in those days, to build a castle and a fortress, subject only to the payment of a quit rent to the Indian ruler.<sup>37</sup> This technically limited the authority of the Company and ensured the supremacy of the ruler. But a further agreement of 1672 affirmed that the town 'shall wholly remain for ever under the English, where they may accordingly act all *the command, government, and justice of the said Town*, as they shall think necessary and most convenient to be done'.<sup>38</sup>

Fort St George was in due course erected, and in 1641 became the headquarters of the Company's operations in that part of the world. As at Bombay, and with even better reason, the prospect of a peaceful existence under British rule and relief from the storms and perils of the India of those days drew many to settle in the neighbourhood of Madras; by 1670 an extensive Black Town (no offence was intended by the choice of this term) had come into existence; in that year the Indian population was reckoned at 40,000. Here, as in Bombay, without any planning the British found themselves faced with responsibilities far beyond those of a trading company. This situation was met in 1688 by the formation, on a strictly English model, of a municipality of Madras with a mayor and twelve aldermen; notable was the inclusion among the sacred twelve of a number of Portuguese and Indians.<sup>39</sup>

Madras was by far the pleasantest of the great English settlements in India. It enjoyed a better climate than the others. The ample space available made possible the construction of elegant bungalows, each in its own spacious compound. The leisurely existence of the Europeans, between periodical assaults by the French and the arrival of fleets from Europe, encouraged the development of a cultured and civilised manner of living with many of the amenities of life in England. Madras had its Roman Catholic churches, ministered to by priests who enjoyed the favour (within limits) of the English; and was later to be adorned by the first church ever erected by the English in India.

The trade in Bengal had long been specially lucrative; but foreigners in that region were nearer than others to some of the great centres of Mughul rule, and were specially vulnerable to attack by ambitious or unreasonable



## The French

governors. The first centre of English operations was Hūgli, formerly a great centre of Portuguese settlement. But this was not easily defensible; after an attack by the local governor, the redoubtable Job Charnock held it prudent to drop down river to the miserable village of Subamati where a few huts were erected. It did not seem likely that the three small villages of Kalikatta, Subamati and Govindpur, on their unhealthy mudbank and surrounded on two sides by pestilential swamps, would grow into a great capital. But so it was. British enterprise and industry, combined with the helpful co-operation of the Bengalis, caused to arise from these unpromising surroundings a great city, which a century later was reckoned without contradiction to be one of the most splendid cities in the world. But the area rented by the Company for Rs. 120 a year was restricted; all outside these limits was within the dominions controlled by the officers of the Great Mogul.

The English, like the Dutch, had no intention of conquering kingdoms and setting up an empire on the ruins. Only by a series of chances did they become rulers, and in the period under review on so minute a scale as hardly to show on the map of India. The fortuitous character of the British acquisition of power is clearly shown by the differences between their main possessions. Bombay was royal territory by right of conquest and cession; any Indians who came to settle there automatically became British subjects. In Madras the British did exercise in practice unrestricted sovereignty; but the technical suzerainty of the Indian ruler was kept in being until 1730 by the payment of the annual quit rent. In Calcutta the English claimed authority only over European residents. If they did find themselves ruling over Indians, their authority was limited at least in theory by the claims of the Muslim rulers, and the position of the British was no more than that of 'a minor zamindar under the local faujdar'.<sup>40</sup>

Like the Dutch, the English adopted a policy of complete neutrality in regard to the religions of India. It was no business of the ruler to interfere with the manners and customs of subjects, however different from those of the rulers. At that time Indian Christians, if any, were Roman Catholics, and not always a good advertisement for their faith. British policy was actuated at best by tolerance, at worst by indifference to the things of the spirit. *Quieta non movere* has been found a reliable principle in many fields of human activity, and not least in the colonial world.

## 6 THE ARRIVAL OF THE EUROPEANS: THE FRENCH

With Portugal, England and the Netherlands already in the field, it was almost inevitable that France should sooner or later enter the fray. The French had, in fact, been among the earliest Europeans to sail the Indian waters, a number of voyages having been noted in the records of the

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sixteenth century. Some intrepid travellers, best known among them Francis Tavernier whose account of his travels was widely read, had made the arduous journey by land and had successfully reached India and returned.<sup>41</sup> Interest was thus aroused; but the earlier French enterprises were municipal or provincial rather than national in scale and not much came of them. The genius and vigour of Colbert (1625–96) were needed before a great French Company to rival those of England and the Netherlands could come into existence.

In 1664 the *Compagnie des Indes Orientales* was formed. The interest of King Louis XIV had been secured, and generous support from the royal finances had been promised. Every effort was made to drum up interest and support in every part of the country. Everything seemed to promise success from the start. But somehow success never came. General interest was no more than languid; the able men sent out to care for the interests of France in the east never received the support of which their merits should have assured them. The French were not, like the English and the Dutch, a nation of traders.<sup>42</sup> What was perhaps lacking was the persistent determination which drove the Dutch and the English forward in face of all the innumerable obstacles which the India of those days could place in the way of Western success.

The first aim of the French Company was the establishment of a colony on the east coast of Madagascar, to provide a place for rest, for repair and for revictualling of ships on the long and exhausting journey to India. This was a reasonable plan. The Cape of Good Hope served the Dutch and later the English in precisely this manner. But from the start the French suffered from a confusion of purpose; commerce and colonisation are different and not always compatible aims; and the finances of France, exhausted by the perpetual wars carried on by the *roi soleil*, were not adequate to provide for the needs of both. And constant interference from the centre periodically tied the hands of the men in India, just at the times at which the wheel of fortune might have begun to turn in their favour.

The first enterprise of the French Company in India was at Surat, not a propitious place to choose, as the Dutch and the English were already there. A second station, built and fortified in the neighbourhood of Mylapore, defended itself against the Dutch with great gallantry for three years; but inevitably the defenders were worn down by stronger forces, and a capitulation was signed on 6 September 1674. But once again luck, which had already played so notable a part in European history in India, was with them. A young aristocrat, Bellanger de L'Espinau, a volunteer in the French service, was negotiating at Porto Novo with the governor under the king of Btjāpur, Sher Khān Lodī, for help against the Dutch and their investment of the fort at St Thomé. Negotiations were proceeding favourably, when in the

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first days of 1673 a Dutch representative arrived bent on cutting out the French in the estimation of the governor. His intervention was less than successful. The governor, having heard both sides, declared roundly that, as the Dutch and the French were neighbours in Europe, they should be the same in India; and so, in the jubilant phrase of L'Espinay, 'he gave us Pondichéri as a place where our nation might settle'.<sup>43</sup> Pondichéri was not much of a place, and in the ceaseless wars of the time changed hands a number of times. But it remained essentially French for nearly three centuries and played a notable part in the history of France in India.

France was equally fortunate in the man who was to make Pondichéri his home for thirty-two years (except when driven out by enemy action), and was to build it up from a fishing village into a fortified centre of government. Francis Martin (1634–1706) was not a man of genius. But he was shrewd in his assessment of the Indian situation (in this a true predecessor of Dupleix), brave, honest and persistent, undiscouraged by ill success. A modern historian has written of the year 1701, 'The city had been launched. It had been in existence for thirty years, and Martin had been at its head for twenty-seven. From that time on Pondichéri was a capital.'<sup>44</sup> The parks are described as having been magnificent – 'great square lawns with star-shaped flower-beds and long well-swept walks . . . in whose shade gentlemen . . . exchanged compliments in as leisurely and elaborate a manner as if they were at Versailles or Marly'.<sup>45</sup>

In one respect the commission given to the French Company differed from that obtained by the English and the Dutch; the grant of Madagascar and the neighbouring islands was made dependent on their using their privileges and powers to promote Christianity there. During the time of Francis Martin piety was of the order of the day in French India. Daily mass was well attended, and naturally still more on the occasion of the great festivals. 'The General' and his wife honoured with their presence the baptisms of the children of French residents, and even the conversion of slaves, thus adding the weight of their authority to missionary work. Not many Frenchmen attended Hindu ceremonies, being held back by religious scruples from being present at worship of which they could not approve.<sup>46</sup> All this had very little effect on the life of the Indian population in the colony and beyond. The great days of French missions in India were to come in the eighteenth and not in the seventeenth century. For the earlier period there is little to record on the subject of missionary enterprise.<sup>47</sup>

#### 7 THE ARRIVAL OF THE EUROPEANS: OTHER NATIONS

For the sake of completeness, reference must be made to one other small European venture. The hardy Danes had been venturing to the west; in

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1617 their explorers were the first in modern times to see the eastern coast of Greenland. In 1616, with the foundation of the Danish East India Company, they entered the field of European competition in the East. In 1620 they were fortunate in acquiring possession of the pleasant little port of Tarangambādi (Tranquebar) south of Madras, and of a small adjoining region. Attempts at starting enterprises in Bengal were unsuccessful, until at a considerably later date the Danes were able to establish themselves at Srirāmpur (Serampore) about sixteen miles above Calcutta on the Hūglī river. Danish trade was never more than minuscule in comparison with that of the European giants. Yet these two small cities were destined to play a much more important part in the Christian history of India than many centres much greater in size and of greater repute in the general history of the world.<sup>48</sup>

At the end of the seventeenth century European possessions showed as no more than a dot on the map of India. There were no more than nineteen principal stations, all on the coast, supported by perhaps forty minor settlements or factories, of which some, though not many, were far inland.<sup>49</sup> The only extensive territory in European hands was Goa, to which the Portuguese clung with fanatical tenacity. Elsewhere the Europeans were dependent on the uncertain goodwill of Indian rulers, towards whom they displayed an almost servile respect and to whom they punctiliously paid their dues. There was no reason at that time to suppose that the Europeans would ever constitute an important element in the affairs of India. But they possessed one quality which was so often lacking in the Indian rulers, pertinacity. Dynasty might yield to dynasty, invasion follow invasion; life and property were never wholly secure. But, like the unwearied peasant, having heard the legions thunder by the merchants returned to their counters and observed the sacred rule of 'business as usual'. The Europeans were always there, and always quietly at work on the unobserved and mysterious process of the erosion of Indian power. After Aurungzīb the Mughuls produced no ruler of even comparable capacity. The Europeans from their restricted numbers brought forth visionaries, warriors, administrators and statesmen, who in a century transformed the empire of Hindustan into the brightest jewel in the British crown.

In 1707 nothing of this could be discerned. The Mughuls were as yet hardly aware of the power of the Hindu renaissance and of their own inexorable decadence. The brains of the Europeans, in their soft and comfortable beds, were as yet hardly visited by dreams of conquest and imperial power.<sup>50</sup>

## 12 · The Mission of Mathurai

### I ROBERT NOBILI – THE FIRST EXPERIMENTS

With the opening of the seventeenth century the centre of interest in Christian missions in India moves southwards to the Tamil country, the Pāṇḍyan realm, and within it to the greatest city of that realm, Kūdal of the four towers to give it its ancient Dravidian name, Mathurai as it is more commonly known today. Now as then, the four great *gopurams*, gateway towers of the Mīnākṣi temple standing high above the flat South Indian plain, beckon the traveller from afar. Then as now, the great temple, served by countless Brāhmins, was the scene of an almost endless round of ceremonies and festivities. Then as now, Mathurai was a great centre of Tamil culture, almost the purest form of the Tamil language being spoken in the city and its environs. It was a great centre of education, being the home of something like a university in which students from many areas streamed together to be instructed in logic and in the various forms of Hindu philosophy.<sup>1</sup>

The first beginnings of Christian penetration had taken place before the end of the sixteenth century. A number of Portuguese were resident in the outskirts of the city; and some families of Parava Christians engaged in trade had moved inland from the coast. To care for them a Jesuit priest Fr Gonçalo Fernandes had been sent to the great city. Born in 1540, Fernandes had arrived in India in 1560 and had served under the viceroy in one inauspicious campaign in Ceylon. While still a young man he had fallen under the spell of Fr Henry Henriques, had joined the Jesuit order in 1562, and had eventually been ordained. It was admitted by his closest friends that his theological qualifications were moderate. But he had a good knowledge of Tamil in the rather rough form in which it was spoken by his parishioners; and, when his provincial asked for information about the ways and doings of the Brāhmins, he was able to compile a report which, though failing to deal with the questions of profound philosophy or theology, is accurate in its delineation of Brāhman life. This shows that Fernandes was sufficiently in touch with high-caste Hindus to have reliable sources of information.<sup>2</sup>

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Fernandes, however, suffered under one grave limitation. He was convinced that all Europeans were superior to all Indians, and that the Portuguese were superior to all other Europeans. He accepted the identity of Portuguese with *parangi*, the name by which foreigners were known in the India of that day, and of *parangi* with Christian. It is reported that, when asking a candidate for baptism whether he wished to become a Christian, he would put the question in the form, 'Do you wish to enter the *parangi kulam* (family, or community)?'<sup>3</sup> In his view, for the highest Brāhman to enter the *parangi* community was exaltation from a lost and base condition to the highest pinnacle to which a human being can aspire. To the Brāhman, convinced of his own superiority to every other kind of human being, to associate with the *parangis* was to sink to the lowest possible level of pollution and degradation. No real meeting of minds was possible.

All this was to be changed by a young Jesuit, a 'young man wanting yet the years of Christ', who arrived in India on 20 May 1605.

Robert Nobili was an Italian aristocrat, nephew of a cardinal, and connected by kinship or friendship with many noble Italian families.<sup>4</sup> He maintained a close relationship with Cardinal Bellarmine until the death of the cardinal in 1621. His decision to join the Jesuit order was unwelcome to members of his family, who believed him capable of rising to the highest level of ecclesiastical eminence. Still more unwelcome was his decision to give himself to missionary work in India. Not for the first or last time in his life Robert gave evidence of an inflexible will. His determination carried the day, and for the next fifty years India was to be his home.

At the start it seemed unlikely that Nobili was destined for any missionary career at all. In January 1606, he moved from Goa to Cochin. There he fell so gravely ill that his life was despaired of; he was told by his companions that he had not more than five or six hours to live.<sup>5</sup> He recovered and lived long; but for the rest of his life his health was never robust. He complained frequently of aches and pains. By the time that he was fifty his sight had become seriously impaired.

Nobili's first appointment was to the Fisher Coast, where, with his inborn facility for learning languages, he acquired in seven months reasonable fluency in the form of the Tamil language which was spoken in those parts. Then came the appointment to Mathurai, which was reached on 15 November 1606. Thus began a career marked by originality unsurpassed by any missionary in India before or after his time.

Not many days had passed before Nobili observed that in eleven years Fr Fernandes had not been able to win to the faith a single high-caste Hindu. He set himself to find out why this was so, and what were the obstacles, if any, that needed to be removed. He was fortunate in encountering a friend

who could give him just the information that he needed. Among the good works carried out by Fernandes was the opening of a clinic which was justly esteemed by both Hindus and Christians, and of an elementary school in which an intelligent young Hindu had been persuaded to serve as teacher. This man agreed to serve as Nobili's instructor in his further study of the Tamil language; at the end of a year Nobili was able to express himself as fluently and correctly in high Tamil as though it had been his native language.<sup>6</sup> During this time a close friendship sprang up between the two young men, and the teacher was prepared to discuss with his pupil Indian ways and usages and those things in the Portuguese way of life which from the Indian point of view were insupportable. The list was almost endless – almost everything which the Portuguese did was objectionable to the high-caste Hindu. They wore leather shoes – no high-caste Indian may touch anything that comes from a dead animal. They ate with knife and fork, which to the Hindu is disgusting. They drank wine and ate meat; worst of all they ate beef – a habit practised by one of the very lowest of the separated communities. The attempts of the missionaries to persuade their converts to adopt Portuguese ways had imposed a fatal barrier on the progress of the Gospel.<sup>7</sup> It became clear to Nobili that all these things would have to go. If he wished to win the Brāhmins for Christ, he must, as far as was possible, become a Brāhman for their sakes.

It was by no means easy to carry out this design. He must wear only Indian dress – the long ochre robe of the *sannyāsi*, with a second cloth cast over the shoulder. He must use only wooden sandals. He must eat only rice and vegetables, and be content with one meal a day; for the preparation of these meals he must secure the services of Brāhman attendants. He must avoid all contact with the lower castes, and these included the Christians of Fernandes' congregation, identified as these were with the despised and hated *parangis*. For a time Nobili and Fernandes continued to occupy the same house; but it soon became clear that the situation was intolerable. The last thing that Fernandes was prepared to do was to make any modification in his European manner of living. Nobili was equally obstinate and would not abandon his experiment. The tension was eased when Fernandes was ordered for a time to go to the Coast; but when he returned it became evident that separation could not be avoided. With the permission of the provincial Albert Laerzio, Nobili prepared to acquire for himself a separate habitation.<sup>8</sup>

There was much to commend Mathurai as the centre for the new kind of mission that Nobili was determined to launch. It was a great centre of population and of Tamil culture, the influence of which radiated far and wide in the Tamil country. But frustrations were many, and Nobili was well aware that the frustrations would not decrease as the work was extended.

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His mind seems to have dwelt on the possibility of leaving Mathurai and starting again elsewhere. This is clear from a letter written to the general in Rome in September 1609: 'Hence I have repeatedly entreated Fr Laerzio the provincial to be allowed to go away to some other place, where I shall be unknown and there dress and live like an Indian.' It can hardly be doubted that Nobili was right. In Mathurai there was already in existence a Christian congregation with which he was determined to have as little as possible to do, and from which he planned to keep his converts, if he made any, in a state of almost complete separation. It would not have been difficult to move elsewhere. Tirunelveli a hundred miles to the south was a centre of Tamil culture second only to Mathurai. In Thaṅjavur Tamil was spoken as correctly as in Mathurai. Tiruchirāpaḷli and Salem were not far away, and, as later events were to show, were accessible to the Gospel. But Nobili was a man under obedience and could not decide for himself. His requests for permission to go elsewhere, beyond the reach of Portuguese influence, fell on deaf ears. He was in Mathurai, and in Mathurai it was ordained by his superiors that he must stay. From this mistaken decision flowed the evasions and subterfuges by which, through many years, the friends of Nobili were perplexed and his enemies enraged. In Mathurai he must stay, and as far as possible maintain the integrity of his work and of his spirit.

Through the help of a friend, whose name is given as Errama Cheṭṭi, brother of one of the lords of Mathurai (the correct Indian form of his name is uncertain), Nobili was able to take up residence in a small and rather dilapidated building, in the part of the city called in the Portuguese spelling Chinnaxauta, which cannot now be identified.<sup>9</sup> In a letter to Cardinal Bellarmine, Nobili describes his manner of life as follows:

I am now living in a cabin with earthen walls and a thatched roof, which is more use to me and makes me happier than if it were a rich palace . . . As I never stir from my house and the nourishment I take is not very substantial, I am always ill, and rare are the days on which I do not feel some pain in the stomach or in the head. My food consists of a little rice – abundant in this country – with some herbs and fruit; neither meat nor eggs ever cross my threshold . . . your eminence must know that we use neither bread nor wine, except at the Holy Sacrifice.<sup>10</sup>

There has been a tendency to romanticise the existence of Nobili in Mathurai and to exaggerate its hardships. The climate of Mathurai, though hot, is generally healthy. The cool season, after the monsoon rains, is delightful. The proximity of the ocean keeps the temperature moderate, and even in the hottest months the dryness of the atmosphere makes it clear and exhilarating. If Nobili's cook was a Brāhman, he could count on being served with simple but delicious meals; his diet did not exclude the use of milk, butter and ghee, and Salem mangoes are the best in the world.



## *Disputes and Conversions*

Nevertheless the regime which he had adopted, and which he maintained year after year, was one which few Europeans find it possible to follow, and its rigour was increased by the solitary manner of life to which he felt himself constrained.

### 2 DISPUTES AND CONVERSIONS

In his new surroundings Nobili continued to study with his beloved teacher the Tamil language, that shoreless sea, and also all the complicated details of poise, manner and conduct, in which the European, if he does not fully understand them, is certain to give offence. Nobili never pretended to be anything but a European, but it was his firm resolve to avoid anything, apart from compromise in matters of the faith, by which any Indian of whatever rank could be offended. Moreover, as friendship deepened, the teacher gradually proved willing to discuss matters of religion with his friend and pupil. A special opportunity to study such matters came with the eclipse of the sun which took place on 25 February 1607, and was observed by the Hindus with special ritual washings. Questioned about this by Nobili, the teacher agreed to a period of intensive study of religious questions, about four or five hours a day for twenty days. The subjects of dispute were those which recur endlessly in the accounts of Nobili's work – the unity and uniqueness of God, the creation and maintenance of the world, the existence of the soul, its survival of bodily death, and the doctrine of transmigration, to which ancient doctrine of Pythagoras, says one of our best authorities for this period, they cling and will not let go, '*tenent mordicus*'.<sup>11</sup> The doctrine of *karma* was the great obstacle, and that with which Nobili always found it most difficult to deal. But in the end the teacher declared himself convinced and asked for baptism.

So Nobili was able to baptise his first high-caste convert; he was given the name Albert, no doubt in honour of the provincial Albert Laerzio. The teacher was not the only young man of inquiring mind with whom Nobili had had contact. Before long several of these followed the example of Albert, and agreed to receive baptism – Alexius Nāyakkan, Ignatius Nāyakkan, Eustace Nāyakkan, and finally Albert's brother, who received the name Francis.<sup>12</sup>

To what did these young men imagine that they had been admitted by accepting the rite of baptism? In those days there were many Hindu reformers. There were many sects, each with its own appropriate rite of initiation. The converts had found a *guru* whom they could love and respect, and whose manner of argumentation seemed to them convincing. But they were allowed to keep their caste rules and to continue to live in their own families. Naturally they were forbidden to take part in idolatrous

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ceremonies. They were in some way aware that Nobili and Fernandes belonged to the same sect; but they were not required to associate with Parava Christians, any more than as Hindus they had associated with Hindus of low caste. They did not take part in the Lord's Supper with these other Christians; and, even had they done so, they would not have been faced, as is every Protestant convert, with the difficulty involved in the use of the common chalice. They were faithful to their *guru*. Had they realised the exclusive claims imposed by Jesus Christ on those who accept allegiance to him? Did they experience any problems, as Christians, in remaining within the Hindu fold?

By now it was clear to Nobili that, though he had shewn himself a skilled debater with intelligent young Hindus, his knowledge of Hinduism still needed to be greatly extended, if he wished to prove himself in discussion with genuinely learned Hindus on their own ground. Further progress could be made only if he was able to learn Sanskrit, the classical language in which the Hindu *gurus* lived and moved and had their being. Once again fortune favoured him. In 1608 a learned Telugu Brāhman, Śivadharmā, having heard of the *sannyāsi* teacher who had come from Rome, desired to make his acquaintance and to convince him of the truth of the Śaivite form of Hindu philosophy. With this in view he offered to teach Nobili Sanskrit. This was no easy task. There was no written grammar of a kind that a European could understand; everything had to be learned by heart. But Nobili had an excellent memory. Śivadharmā was a good teacher, and relations between teacher and pupil developed in such a way that before long Nobili was able to write of his *carissimo maestro*. By August 1609 it was reckoned that he was able to speak Sanskrit fluently.<sup>13</sup> Nobili was still not satisfied. Behind the kind of Sanskrit that he was learning he sensed the presence of another world – that hidden world of the *Veda*, the repository of the secret lore of the Brāhmins, of which he had heard but of the contents of which he had hardly any idea. Trusting in the power of friendship, he asked Śivadharmā to write down for him these sacred books. This was a request calculated to fill the mind of the teacher with alarm. Knowledge of the *Veda* was restricted to the twice-born castes alone; access to it was strictly forbidden to *śūdras* and to women. Revelation of the mysteries to unqualified persons was a crime which could be visited with alarming penalties. After long hesitation Śivadharmā consented, trusting to his friend's discretion to keep his collusion secret. Nobili now had access, such as no European had ever had before, to the ancient wisdom of the Hindus.

Some doubt must exist as to what it was that Śivadharmā actually revealed. The term *Veda* is in itself less than explicit. Did Nobili acquire a knowledge of the four great original *Vedas* which are the source and foundation of all that followed? Or was his acquaintance rather with

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compendia of information, such as used to be compiled for the benefit of students, in which extracts from many writings would be included and some no doubt from the original *Vedas* themselves? No definite answer can be given to the question, since the one source on which such an answer could be based no longer exists – of the Sanskrit writings of Nobili not a single one has survived.<sup>14</sup>

### 3 OPPOSITION AND CONTROVERSIES

Nobili was well aware that, though he had powerful supporters, he also had powerful critics among the missionaries, and that these might sooner or later be in a position to bring his whole enterprise to an end. It seemed to him wise to let his work be tested by its results as seen in the character of some of his converts, and also to let Christians of the Mathurai mission see that there were in India other Christians who could not possibly be called *parangis*. He decided to send some of his converts to the Malabar Coast. Thereby he would achieve simultaneously three objects. The Tamil Christians would there see Christians who were neither Paravas like the congregation of Fernandes nor Brāhmans like themselves, but maintained their own specific Christian position within the wide fellowship of the church. He would give to the Jesuits and others in Cochin, trained up as they were to suspect all novelties, the opportunity to see Christians of the Mathurai mission and to assure themselves by personal contact of the genuineness of their conversion. And it would be possible for these young Christians to lay before the Visitor himself the state of the mission to which they belonged and to convince him of the urgent need of further help to stabilise the work of the mission and to ensure its future. Nobili chose for this venture two young Christians in whose reliability he could place complete confidence – a brother of his first convert Alexis to whom he had given the name Visuvāsam ('faith' or 'the faithful one') and Peter Malaiyappan, 'the rock'.

The experiment was a complete success. The two young men commended themselves to all whom they met by their modesty and fervour. They took every opportunity of mingling with the Thomas Christians, and noted with approval that these too were careful not to associate closely with recent converts of lower caste. Before leaving the Serra they were sent to meet Archbishop Roz, who administered to them the rite of confirmation, the first Christians of the Mathurai mission to receive this blessing.

The most important outcome of the mission, however, was that Nobili's urgent need for help in the work at Mathurai was met by the appointment of a colleague, Manuel Leitão, a Portuguese, who was the novice-master in Cochin. Already thirty-seven years old, Leitão was described as enthusiastic,

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of quick understanding, friendly and genial in his relationships with others. Inspired by an eager desire to go to Mathurai, he had asked the young visitors whether they thought that he could be useful in that mission. It may have been as a result of their intercession on his behalf that on 10 August, already clothed in the ochre robe which was the uniform of the Mathurai mission, he set out to cross the mountains *en route* for his new work.

Leitão had been warned of the hardships that would await him on the far side of the mountains; but he seems to have been quite unprepared for what life in the mission was really like. Often it is the small adaptations that are most trying to the newcomer to India. When supper-time arrived and he found that he was expected to sit on the floor with a plantain leaf in front of him and to eat rice and vegetables with his fingers, his fastidious mind was so revolted by this unfamiliar way of behaving that he could do no more than force himself to swallow a few morsels. Only after three days could he begin to accustom himself to the new ways.<sup>15</sup>

This was only the beginning of troubles. Leitão was deeply impressed by Nobili's total devotion to his mission to the disregard of all else. He was pleased with the converts and their ways. But it soon became evident that eagerness is no substitute for the staying power which was so remarkably evident in Nobili himself. Leitão could not adapt himself to the rule of only one meal a day; so it came about that the missionaries hardly ever ate together. He became discouraged at the difficulty of learning the Tamil language. It is possible that Nobili was impatient with a colleague who was so far from coming up to his expectations – one of the charges against which he had to defend himself was that of having been harsh and arrogant in his treatment of Leitão.<sup>16</sup> Whatever the causes may have been, by the end of the year Leitão had thrown in his hand, and Nobili, deeply disappointed by the failure of one in whom he had reposed such high hopes, had sadly to report to Vico, in a letter dated 12 June, 1610,<sup>17</sup> that he was once more alone.

Nobili was not the man to seek out controversy for its own sake. But almost inevitably he found himself for many years of his life at the centre of controversy.

In Mathurai, that central point of Hindu orthodoxy, many were disturbed by the fact that a foreigner had managed to acquire a residence in a high-caste quarter of the city. When it became known that the same foreigner had obtained access to some at least among the secrets of Brāhman lore, anxiety deepened. With the baptism of his first converts, many must have felt that their whole position as leaders in society and in the intellectual and religious life of Mathurai was threatened. Fierce reactions were sooner or later to be expected.

Opposition seems to have reached a climax in the early months of the year

### *Enemies from Without and from Within*

1609.<sup>18</sup> Two Brāhmins publicly brought a series of charges against Nobili, the head and sum of which was that he had spoken against the teaching of the *Vedas*, that he had declared bathing at Rāmesvaram or in the Kāvēri to be of no value as a way to salvation, and that he had declared the caste of the *rājās* to be higher than that of the Brāhmins. A special attack was made on Śivadharma for his treachery in associating with a low-born foreigner. No less than 800 Brahmins assembled to hear the discussion of the charges. It fell to the lot of Śivadharma, not yet baptised, to speak on behalf of his friend and mentor.

Śivadharma, according to the reports, spoke so well that he not merely covered himself with distinction but also shewed that Nobili was innocent of the charges that had been brought against him. In many disputes with the Brāhmins, he had shewn himself a learned, effective and courteous controversialist. From that time on the position of Nobili as far as the Hindus was concerned was assured; he had earned the respect if not the agreement of the learned of the city. This is shewn in the title *Tattuva-bōdhakar*, the teacher of reality, by which he came to be generally known.<sup>19</sup>

So for the moment the Brāhmins were quieted. From other quarters even greater dangers were now to be apprehended.

Study and public debate had meant no remission in Nobili's ceaseless work of evangelism. The number of converts continued to grow. At Easter 1609 he was able to report the baptism of eight high-caste candidates. The number of the baptised had now reached fifty.<sup>20</sup> A little later he wrote to his provincial that he hoped soon to be able to baptise another twelve, chief among whom would be his *carissimo maestro* Śivadharma.

#### 4 ENEMIES FROM WITHOUT AND FROM WITHIN

Since numbers were growing so rapidly Nobili decided that a church must be built, near to his residence and of course entirely separate from the church in which the Paravas worshipped. Hardly had this been achieved when the work had to endure the gravest blow ever directed against it. A Parava Christian who had come up from the coast informed the high-caste Christians that any of them who had been baptised by Nobili, and touched with saliva as the Roman rite required, had thereby lost caste and were no better than *parangis*.<sup>21</sup> The disturbance among the Christians was more than considerable. This was just what they had always feared. They knew that in some sense the *parangis* were fellow-Christians, separate as the two groups had always been. They knew also that, when Nobili wished to make his confession, he would go at dead of night to the house of Fernandes. The two Fathers worked under the same superiors, and the separation between them was much less than complete. How, then, were the high-caste

Christians to behave? Fourteen of the Brahman converts ceased coming to church. Nobili did his utmost to calm the panic, but with only partial success. The fourteen were prepared to come as far as the outer gate of the church compound but no further. They assured Nobili that they regarded themselves as Christians; but that, if this involved them in becoming *parangis*, they would rather die.

Something had to be done. Nobili decided to set forth a 'manifesto', in which he would make plain his own understanding of his position, and of the vocation which he was fulfilling as a teacher of the truth in Mathurai. A long statement was drawn up in Tamil, written on palm-leaf *olais*, and by Nobili's orders nailed to a tree in front of his house where all could see it. The most important sentences in this document are as follows:

I am not a *parangi*. I was not born in the land of the *parangis*, nor was I ever connected with their race . . . I came from Rome, where my family hold the same rank as respectable *rājās* hold in this country . . . With those who come to speak with me I discuss no other questions than those which concern the salvation of their souls. In this matter I treat of the existence of God and his attributes, how he is one and three, how he created the world and men, and all other things . . . The law which I preach is the law of the true God . . . Whoever says that it is the law of the *parangis*, fit only for low castes, commits a very great sin, for the true God is not the God of one race, but the God of all. We must confess that he deserves to be adored by all.<sup>22</sup>

The 'manifesto' gives clear evidence of the confusion of thought and language in which Nobili, his friends and his enemies were all involved. Local people, including most of the Christians, identified *parangi* and Christian. Nobili, asserting that *parangi* meant Portuguese, made a distinction between *parangi* and Christian. But in point of fact, long before Nobili came to Mathurai, the term *Feringhi*, Franks, had been used all over the East for all Europeans, and the Muslims took it for granted that all Europeans were Christians. So the argument in Mathurai would run more or less on the following lines: 'If you are a Christian, you must be a *parangi*.' 'I am a Christian, but I am not a *parangi*.' 'If you are not a *parangi*, you are not a Christian.' And so it would go on endlessly without producing conviction on either side. It is doubtful whether Nobili's mission ever fully recovered from the blow dealt it by the Parava Christian.<sup>23</sup>

The next wave of troubles which Nobili had to face was growing up in the ranks of those who ought to have been his friends. 'A man's foes shall be they of his own household.' The course followed by Nobili was adventurous and without precedent in India, though he could point to parallels in the work of his fellow-Jesuit Matthew Ricci and his colleagues in China. All kinds of rumours began to circulate, the most absurd being that Nobili himself had

### *Enemies from Without and from Within*

turned Hindu. Many factors played a part in the development of this animosity. The Portuguese did not like the assertion of independence by the Italian Nobili. His constant emphasis on his aristocratic origins could not be agreeable to those who could make no such claims.<sup>24</sup> Age against youth; the defenders of the old ways could not but be offended by the new. Fernandes could not but be distressed by the division among Christians which, as he saw it, Nobili had precipitated in Mathurai.

Criticisms were many and varied; they tended to converge on six changes which Nobili was affirmed to have made in Christian practice:

Nobili allowed to his converts the use of the *ṣūṅṅūl*, the sacred thread worn over the left shoulder, which is the identifying mark of the twice-born castes.

He allowed the use of sandal paste on the forehead, to take the place of the sacred ashes of Śiva or the trident of Viṣṇu.

He did not forbid the practice of ceremonial bathing, commonly regarded as a part of Hindu ritual.

He permitted the *kuḍumi*, the sacred tuft of hair grown by Brāhmins on an otherwise shaven skull.

He had introduced changes into the existing versions of the Creed and other religious formulae.

In marriage he had substituted for the ring of Christian tradition the *tāli*, the neck-ornament worn by Hindu women as the sign of marriage.<sup>25</sup>

Nobili had acted cautiously, without giving any sign of the insubordinate spirit with which he was later charged. He had consulted with his provincial at every point. He had secured from his ordinary, Archbishop Roz, permission for most of the changes that he had made, and this was not done without the knowledge of Menezes, the primate of the East. When in the year 1608 Laerzio forbade him to baptise any more Brāhmins until certain doubtful points had been cleared up, Nobili obeyed, though this meant bringing to a halt the most promising part of his work.<sup>26</sup>

Matters came to a head when on 7 May 1610 Gonçalo Fernandes despatched to the Jesuit general a long letter,<sup>27</sup> in which he recapitulated all the regular charges against Nobili, adding for good measure the statement that he had learned from a Brāhman that, in the course of a long discussion with Nobili, the name of Jesus Christ had not once been mentioned.<sup>28</sup> When Nobili learned of the letter of Fernandes, he was deeply wounded that this had been sent without his knowledge, and that charges had been laid against him without his having been informed of what they were.

Up to this point Nobili had had the advantage of powerful protectors. Now the stars in their courses began to fight against him.

## *The Mission of Mathurai*

In 1610 the Jesuit general Aquaviva sent to India as Visitor the sixty-three year old Nicolas Pimenta, who had already had experience of India on two previous visits. The general seems to have had a high opinion of his gifts for organisation; but these gifts, such as they were, were offset by grave personal defects. Pimenta was a man of inordinate self-confidence and arrogance. What he had determined to do that he would do, and opposition was useless. From Malabar came the rather pathetic report that such conduct as his might be suitable in a secular or military commander, but that in a spiritual leader it was less than seemly.<sup>29</sup> From the start it was clear that he had arrived strongly prejudiced against the mission of Mathurai and all its works. Worse was to follow. On 21 December 1611 Fr Pero Francisco, after a spell in Europe as procurator of the society, returned to India. He was immediately appointed by Pimenta to the post of provincial of Malabar with a clear commission to alter everything that Laerzio had done. Fr L. Besse SJ goes so far as to assert that 'he was prejudiced against the method adopted by Fr de Nobili and wished at all costs to forbid it; in other words, it was his intention to ruin the mission of Mathurai in its beginnings'.<sup>30</sup>

With three such enemies as Fernandes, Pimenta and Francisco in the field, it is not surprising that for the next twelve years the life of Nobili was taken up almost wholly with long, repetitive and infinitely wearisome controversies.

### 5 NOBILI ON THE DEFENSIVE

Nobili's first and necessary action was to set out in writing his own understanding of his mission, and to defend himself against the criticisms launched by Fernandes and others. In a few weeks his *Responsio* was ready and sent off to Goa in time to be carried to Rome by the autumn fleet of 1610.

The *Responsio* shows signs of having been written in haste.<sup>31</sup> A good deal of it is scholastic in method, showing an acquaintance with theological texts surprising in one who cannot have had access at this time to many books. This part of the work makes tedious reading. The essential sections are those in which Nobili really comes to grips with his subject and deals with the criticisms listed above.

To most of the criticisms Nobili has little difficulty in replying. Sandal paste has no religious significance. Various translations of a text can be given without altering the essential meaning. It seemed only commonsense to substitute for the unfamiliar ring in marriage the *tāli*, universally recognised in Indian society as the marriage symbol. All that had been done was simply with a view to making no unnecessary changes in the appearance and customs of high-caste converts.

The situation was very different when he came to the question of the sacred thread worn by members of the twice-born castes. Nobili was at pains



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to show, with a good deal of special pleading, that the thread had social but not religious significance. Here he may have been misled by a false parallel with the European society from which he came. In the quasi-Christian West the equality of all men in the sight of God was fully accepted in theory, though often denied in practice. There could be differences in social status, but these were man-made – socially conditioned but in no sense ultimate. In Europe, in other words, it was possible to distinguish between the social and the religious. Nobili was mistaken in thinking that such a distinction can be maintained in India. To be born a Brāhman is a sign of immense merit acquired in some previous existence; such status is linked inseparably to the doctrine of *karma* with all the religious implications that follow on that doctrine. Any Hindu, seeing a man wearing a sacred thread, would conclude at once that such a man was making a claim to be a member of a twice-born Hindu caste. This would apply as much to Nobili's converts as to any other high-caste Hindu – a place could be found for them in the Hindu social system as long as they continued to observe Hindu usages. The same ambiguity attaches to Nobili's attempt to show that to be a Brāhman did not necessarily imply priestly status. It is true that not all Brāhmins officiated as priests; but Brāhmins alone were qualified to act as priests to the higher Hindu castes.

Nobili's position was much strengthened by the results of a solemn hearing of the evidence of a number of his converts, on which Pimenta insisted in spite of the generally favourable judgement on Nobili and his work set forth by a solemn assembly of consultants in Cochin. The investigation took place in Mathurai between 12 September and 22 November 1610. Ten Christians were summoned – three Brāhmins, three Nāyaks, two Vellālas, an 'Irakole', and a learned man whose caste is not specified. To every one of the questions put to them the witnesses gave a clear and unhesitating answer. A few sentences will make clear the tenour of their replies:

5. Our Aiyar has never forbidden us to attend the mass or sermons of Fr Gonçalo or to make our confession to him; nor did he ever threaten to exclude us from his 'church of Jesus', as he calls it, if we did so.
6. We know perfectly well that our Aiyar goes to Fr Gonçalo to make his confession. In his absence we would do the same.
8. We do not invariably bathe before going to mass. If we do so, it is purely as a matter of physical cleanliness without any superstitious ceremonies.
15. We know who the pope is, and recognise him as the chief shepherd of the universal church. The archbishop of the Serra (Cranganore) is our spiritual head. Some of our members have been confirmed by him . . . When we were baptized we were given neither money nor clothing, and we were promised no advantages in this earthly life. We became Christians in order to obtain salvation, and for no other reason.<sup>32</sup>

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This declaration was a resounding victory for Nobili. The allegations of Fernandes were shown to be without foundation, and the testimony of the witnesses was unmistakably Christian. This ought to have ended the matter. Unfortunately the enemies of Nobili were not to be so easily silenced.

Among these enemies must be reckoned Christopher de Sá, the successor of Menezes as archbishop of Goa. Sá had hoped to obtain from the pope a direct condemnation of Nobili and his methods. Instead, the pope instructed him to meet with Nobili, Archbishop Roz and the best theologians in India, to consider all the questions under dispute, and to send a full report to the holy see. Very unwillingly the archbishop of Goa had to obey the mandate of the pope.

The conference opened in Goa on 4 February 1619.<sup>33</sup> It soon became clear that the weight of theological opinion was on the side of Nobili. The second inquisitor Ferdinand de Almeyda made a notable speech, in which he admitted that in the past he had been strongly opposed to Nobili, but now having studied the whole problem afresh he had found himself compelled to change his opinion.<sup>34</sup> It might have been thought that Francis Roz, with his twenty-five years of experience in India and his minute acquaintance with all the circumstances of the case, would have been able to sway the decision. But the archbishop of Goa had made up his mind and was not to be influenced by any arguments. In view of the strength of the support which Nobili had been able to rally to himself, the archbishop could not proceed to pass sentence against him as he had desired to do, and had to content himself with collecting the various expressions of opinion and the votes and sending them to Rome via Lisbon.<sup>35</sup> At the same time he despatched a secret message calculated to stir up feeling against Nobili. In Goa he gave expression to his venom by preaching a vigorous sermon against the new methods, in which he went to the extreme of mentioning the culprit by name. Nobili, in a letter to his brother, sadly complains that the archbishop has done his utmost 'to sully my name and reputation'.<sup>36</sup>

So after all the case came back to the pope. Paul V had died, and had been succeeded by Gregory XV.<sup>37</sup> One of the first acts of the new pope was to appoint a commission to examine all the documents from Goa and to submit a considered opinion on the basis of which a final decision could be reached. The main theological work was entrusted to Peter Lombard, archbishop of Armagh. As this venerable man could not go to Ireland, he lived in Rome, and had acquired a considerable reputation as one of the acutest theological minds of the age.<sup>38</sup> He gave himself with assiduity to the study of the complex problems that had come to him from South India, and took more than a year to reach a judgement. This, when published, was found to be almost wholly favourable to Nobili. The archbishop insists only that everything idolatrous must be abandoned, and that in the use of the

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traditional Indian symbols no occasion must be given for supposing that the old superstitions are perpetuated with them.<sup>39</sup>

It remained only for the pope to express his agreement. This was done in the apostolic constitution *Romanae sedis antistes* of 31 January 1623. Once again the decision was almost wholly in favour of Nobili and of the methods of the Mathurai mission:

Taking pity on human weakness, till further deliberation by us and the apostolic see, we grant by these letters present, in virtue of the apostolic authority, to the Brāhmans and the Gentiles who have been and will be converted to the Faith, permission to take and wear the thread and [to grow] the *kuḍumi* as distinctive signs of their social status, nobility, and other offices; we allow them to use sandal paste as an ornament, and ablutions for the cleansing of the body, provided, however, that to remove all superstitions and all alleged causes for scandal, they observe the following regulations: [detailed regulations for the avoidance of scandal follow].<sup>40</sup>

Once again Nobili had triumphed. The highest authority in the church had vindicated him and exonerated him from all blame. His seventeen years of labour and witness had not been in vain; henceforth he was to be left in peace.

### 6 THE LATER YEARS OF NOBILI

The missionary work of Nobili in India can be divided into four periods of unequal length:

There was first the period of glad and adventurous pioneering, crowned with rapid and unexpected success (1606–10).

Then followed the sad years of controversy, in which the work of the mission was carried on, but with endless interruptions through journeys and the writing of documents related to accusations and defamation (1610–23).

The third period was that of the extension of the mission, accompanied by grave difficulties through persecution, the dearth of workers, and the declining health of Nobili, whose sight was causing grave anxiety as early as 1626 (1623–45).

The final period lasted eleven years, and was spent in relegation and increasing blindness, Nobili having been sent away from his beloved Mathurai by the higher authorities of his order. During these years Nobili was occupied in the extension of the mission through almost ceaseless literary work.

In the third period, the political situation, with which the fortunes of the mission were intimately involved, had become much less favourable to the work. Muthuvrappa Nāyakkar, who had ruled Mathurai under the overlordship of the king of Vijayanagar from 1609 to 1623, died and was

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succeeded by Tirumalai Nāyakkar, by far the most powerful member of the ruling dynasty. This potentate intended to make of himself a great conqueror. To this end he assembled a considerable army, and much of the history of the times is little more than a chronicle of his endless battles and campaigns. Some of the Christian converts were drawn into the service of the ruler. The people of the area suffered severely from the recurrent famines which were due at least in part to his military ambitions. The general atmosphere of suspicion and uncertainty was unfavourable to amicable discussion with Hindus and to the extension of the Christian congregation.

The combination of all these factors gradually produced a great change in Nobili's understanding of his missionary task. Gone now was the extreme seclusion and withdrawal from the world by which his early years had been marked. Gone was the exclusive concentration on Mathurai and on the highest castes alone. Nobili became for the first time a missionary traveller. Four centres are mentioned frequently in such sources as we have – Tiruchirāpaḷli (wrongly written by the Europeans as Trichinopoly) with its great rock; Salem (properly Sēlam) a pleasant country town at the foot of the Shevaroy hills; and two smaller centres – Sendamangalam and Moramangalam. In each of these the preaching of the Gospel encountered fierce opposition, even persecution; but the number of Christians continued quietly to grow, Brāhmins forming only a small proportion of the converts and the work spreading more rapidly among other castes.

What turned the work of the mission in an entirely new direction was an apparently chance meeting with a member of one of the castes reckoned lowest in the social scale. This man belonged to the special sect of the Paraiya community known as Vaḷḷuvar, who serve as priests to that community.<sup>41</sup> The most distinguished among them was Tiruvaḷḷuvar, the reputed author of the *Tirukkural* the most famous of all Tamil classics. Though technically of the excluded community, some members of the group are held in high esteem by members of the higher castes. This seems to have been the case with this man, who had a considerable reputation for his knowledge of Tamil religious writings, and was affirmed to have 2,000 followers in his own community. Having heard of the 'teacher of reality' and his writings, he desired to make contact with him. The first meeting seems to have taken place on 31 July 1626.

Nobili had great hesitation about accepting this unexpected candidate for baptism. So far his work had been entirely among members of the higher castes, access to whom had been preserved for him only by his careful abstinence from every kind of contact with those whose touch meant defilement. If he were to change his policy, he might jeopardise the whole future of the Mathurai mission in its existing form. But the pressure of

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sincerity could not be resisted; sometime towards the end of 1626 – the exact date seems not to have been recorded – the inquirer was baptised and received the name Muttiudaiyān, he who has attained blessedness, a name translated by the fathers not altogether accurately as Hilarius. Once baptised, Muttiudaiyān set himself to bring into the fold as many as possible of his former adherents, with such success that the number of believers in the lower castes very soon outstripped by far the numbers of Brāhmins and of members of the other socially acceptable castes.

Nobili was now not without colleagues. At this time (1631) Fr Emmanuel Martins was in charge of the work at Mathurai, and found the division of his time and his responsibilities between the higher and the lower orders a considerable embarrassment. By day he was a teacher of the higher castes; the others could come to him only after dark, when their presence would not be so noticeable. But this was less than convenient to the poorer believers; and in any case it was clear that the subterfuge could not be for ever maintained. Martins felt that the whole of his time should be given to the poorer Christians, who by now greatly surpassed the others in numbers. He accordingly withdrew to Tiruchirāpaḷli, leaving the work in Mathurai to Nobili and to Antony Vico, now well installed in the mission and one of the best colleagues Nobili ever had.<sup>42</sup>

The action of Martins in turning to the lower castes had at the start been a purely personal decision. But, with the steady increase in numbers, the time came when some regular solution for the increasingly complicated situation had to be found. Nobili himself had adopted the rigid code of the *sannyāsis*, believing that only by so doing he could penetrate the world of the Brāhmins and render himself acceptable to the gods among men. But he had noted that other castes had priests of their own, who did not necessarily belong to the Brahmanical order. The Vellāḷas, the great land-holding caste, had their *paṇḍārams*, priests who were not required to keep themselves so completely separate from the lower orders as the Brāhmins were. It should be possible to provide, alongside the order of *sannyāsis*, to which Nobili, Vico and Martins belonged, a second order of *paṇḍāraswāmis*, ascetics who would observe a rule rather less rigid than that of the Brāhmin *sannyāsis*, and would be able to move more readily than they with all classes of people. Thus the ministrations of the church would be extended from above downwards.

Nobili took advantage of a visit to Cochin to consult the provincial and the archbishop as to the new step he was planning to take. Consent was readily given. Balthasar da Costa was named as the first *paṇḍāraswāmi*. He reached Karūr on 18 July 1640, the first regular head of the newly developing work of the mission. Da Costa (1610–73) was comparatively young, and threw himself with the utmost enthusiasm into the work to

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which he had been assigned. There could be no doubt of the success of the new method. One door after another opened before him. But there is a certain unpleasant boastfulness about his reports as these are included in the Annual Letters.<sup>43</sup> In three years since he took up the work he has baptised no less than 2,000 persons.<sup>44</sup> A year later, he has baptised at Tanjore 150 catechumens, 70 of whom belonged to the higher castes, 80 were Paraiyas or Pallas.<sup>45</sup> Next, 700 are recorded 'and the joy caused by these conversions is doubled by the piety and innocence by which these new converts are distinguished'.<sup>46</sup>

Da Costa was not above throwing in the suggestion that his method of working was more acceptable to the Lord than that of Nobili. Christ himself had not chosen for the conversion of the world chieftains and learned men but a group of fishermen from the lower rungs of the social scale. By granting such success to the methods of da Costa, the Lord had shewn his approval of these methods. He had, however, the grace to write in the Annual Letter for 1644 in a rather different tone:

What a man is this Fr Nobili! What a model for all missionaries! The older he grows, the more he adds to the authority of his life and to the splendour of his apostolic virtues. Almost blind and loaded with physical weakness, he works as though he were the most eager and stalwart of young missionaries, his zeal supplying the strength which is lacking to his body.<sup>47</sup>

There was something to be said on the side of da Costa. When a careful enumeration of all conversions is made, it seems that the number of Brāhmins baptised in forty-five years did not exceed two hundred, and not all of these had remained faithful; whereas at the time of Nobili's death in 1656, the total number of baptisms in the mission cannot have been less than 40,000.<sup>48</sup>

Moreover, it had been found very difficult to recruit workers who would be able to endure the full rigour of the ascetic life as Nobili had planned it. The last *sannyāsi* priest was Fr Joseph Arcolino, a man of great virtue, who died in 1676.<sup>49</sup> From that time on, the work was carried forward by the *paṇḍāraswāmis* of whom Balthasar da Costa had been the first.<sup>50</sup> On the other hand it may well be asked whether the mission to the lower castes would have obtained the success granted to it, if the way had not been prepared by the adventurous policy of Nobili, and by the self-sacrificing work carried on by him and his *sannyāsi* colleagues for so many years.

The last years of the life of Nobili were marked by much sadness and suffering. During the 1640s, like other members of the Society of Jesus and their Indian companions, he had to endure much hostility, and even cruel imprisonment, provoked in part by the imprudence of younger members of the mission.<sup>51</sup>

## *Nobili as Writer*

Worse was to follow. In 1646, when Nobili was about seventy years old, the authorities of the society in India decided to remove him from his beloved Mathurai and to send him elsewhere. He was ordered to betake himself to Jaffna, charged with the oversight of the Jesuit missions in the north of Ceylon. No certainty exists as to the motives which led the authorities to such a decision.

Three years later Nobili was ordered to move again, this time to Mylapore, the traditional site of the tomb of the apostle Thomas. The habit of obedience ingrained in the Jesuit from the day of his joining the order prevailed, and Nobili undertook the move without a word of protest. He knew that Mylapore would be his last home upon earth and that he would never breathe the air of Mathurai again.

On arrival, he moved away from the little town to a small residence of mud-bricks and thatch which he had had constructed not far from the sea. Here, helped by four Brahman Christians who remained faithful to him in all his afflictions, he settled down to make good use of the time that remained to him. Though his bodily ailments were so many, his mind seems to have been perfectly clear, and his astonishing memory retained and could supply the quotations which he needed for his literary work. Almost to the end he was dictating to his companions the works which were to be his final contribution to the building up of a Christian literature in India.

Early in January 1656, feeling that his work was now completed, he brought his dictation to an end. A few days later, on 16 January of that year, he fell asleep.<sup>52</sup> No record of the place of his burial has been preserved. Nobili is like Moses in that the location of the tomb in which he rests is known only to God.

## 7 NOBILI AS WRITER

At an early date Nobili had realised that, if his work was not to be lost, it must be perpetuated by being reduced to writing. There were two aspects to this task. He must record the methods and arguments that he had used in his controversies with the non-Christians. Secondly, he must communicate in writing the kind of instruction which he was wont to give to converts, both in preparation for baptism, and later as a means of deepening and strengthening their Christian faith. It is known that Nobili wrote works both in Sanskrit and in Telugu, but none of these has been found, and it must be regarded as likely that none of them has survived. But his Tamil works were copied and widely distributed. A considerable number of these works has survived, and several have been printed.<sup>53</sup> Through these the way has been opened to making closer acquaintance with Nobili the teacher than had been possible at any time since his death.

The Italian Jesuit had no real predecessors in the art of writing Tamil

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prose. All classical Tamil literature is in verse. So Nobili had to plan and construct his instrument before he could use it. His Tamil works make plain the strength and weakness of his knowledge of the Tamil language.<sup>54</sup>

That knowledge was extensive. Presumably he had Indian helpers in his work; he never makes a grammatical or syntactical error, though some of the constructions he uses, such as the Sanskrit superlative which has no place in Tamil, are peculiar.<sup>55</sup> But what he writes is Brāhman Tamil, heavy and polysyllabic. He shews little acquaintance, if any, with the earlier or *sangam* literature, in which Tamil is seen in its monosyllabic glory.<sup>56</sup> For every religious term he will find and introduce a Sanskrit equivalent; but many of the Sanskrit terms he uses are already lengthy compound words. He is anxious not to be misunderstood, and this means that the structure of his sentences is often complex and involved. Nobili's Tamil lacks eloquence; though it can be understood, only occasionally will it be read with pleasure.

A brief outline of three of his main works will make plain the scope of his intentions and his manner of carrying them out.

The work to which Nobili probably attached the greatest importance was the *Gnānōpathēsam* (spiritual instruction, or catechism), in which he brought together all that he regarded as essential for the instruction of his converts. The work falls into five parts – truths which the human mind can grasp aided only by the light of human reason; truths which reason is able to grasp, but which cannot be proved by reason alone; truths which the unaided human reason is not able to grasp; explanation of the prayers (Lord's Prayer etc.); the marks of the Christian religion (the virtues).

The work reflects the scholastic tradition in which Nobili had been brought up, and which he saw no reason to modify in its essentials. He spends much space expounding in great detail such difficult doctrines as that of the Trinity. To have communicated all this in Tamil was a notable *tour de force*; but it is possible to wonder how much of all this Nobili's simpler hearers were able to take in.<sup>57</sup>

The *Tūshaṇattikkāram*, refutation of blasphemies, or cavils, is another considerable work, more than 500 pages in the edition produced in 1964. Here Nobili gathers together the principal objections to or calumnies against the Christian faith, and proposes to find convincing arguments for the refutation of each.

In order to win the attention of his readers Nobili uses many illustrations from daily life and from literature. But the book on the whole makes tedious reading. Nobili seems unable to go directly to any point; he beats about the bush, and often his phrasing is long and cumbrous. The work ends with four chapters directed to the preachers of the Word, pointing out the various hindrances to the acceptance of the Gospel for which they themselves may be responsible. The last paragraph of all is an almost passionate rebuke to



preachers who will not take the trouble to learn the language of those to whom they will speak:

By their failure they admit that they are dumb. They are like a man who sets out to write without having a pen, or one who attempts to speak without having a tongue, or like a man who sets out to build a tower without having ascertained whether the resources that he has assembled are adequate or no. That the spiritual teachers who have come to various lands to teach the divine Word to men of various tongues must necessarily learn the language of the various countries can be apprehended from the example of the Divine Teacher himself: [the gift of tongues at Pentecost as the prelude to the worldwide mission].

So from this we see that the teachers who now are called to spread the divine Word among all nations must necessarily learn the language of the nations where they are.<sup>58</sup>

The *Āttumanirṇayam*, the exposition of the doctrine of the soul, became known to the western world earlier than most of the writings of Nobili.<sup>59</sup> Unlike some of the other works, which are discursive and treat of many subjects, this considerable book concentrates on one subject only – the nature of the soul in the light of Hindu doctrines and Christian answers. The treatise falls into six sections, of which one may be called psychological (intellect and will); two are controversial (the refutation of the doctrines of transmigration and of pantheism); the other three are more properly theological (the nature of true blessedness, the beatific vision, the joys of heaven and the torments of hell).

In his early discussions with Brāhmans Nobili had found the doctrine of rebirth the hardest nut to crack. To the Hindu mind, now as then, it presents itself as the perfectly logical and coherent explanation of all that concerns human destiny; one who ceases to believe in it ceases thereby to be a Hindu. This view is incompatible with the Christian understanding of redemption and salvation. No reconciliation between the divergent views is possible.

The work opens with the quotation, in Sanskrit, of the Gospel verse (Mark 8: 36), ‘What shall it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul?’ This is then translated into Tamil and expounded word by word. The second paragraph makes clear the spirit in which the work is written:

The meaning is as follows: Man may enjoy every sensual pleasure that the world can offer; he may possess all wealth and worldly goods; he may be famed in all royal splendour and luxury. But what is the advantage of this earthly profit and wealth and good fortune, which is like a bubble of air which rises out of the water and explodes – I say, if after death the soul laden with sin comes to hell, there to burn like a log of wood which burns but is never consumed in inextinguishable fire, and to suffer everlasting loss?

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This quotation leads us to the heart of Nobili and to the spirit in which all his works are written. He is throughout a controversialist and an evangelist. All the doctrines of the non-Christians are delusions. Their gods are devils. The offers of salvation which they make are false, since in them there is no salvation to be found. Whether he is arguing with Brāhmins or trying to fortify Christians in their faith, Nobili is upheld all the time by the unshakable conviction that there is only one system of truth, and that no other system can even enter into consideration except as the object of refutation.

The recovery and the publication of so many of the works of Nobili make possible a reconsideration of the 'accommodation' which he practised and recommended, and which was to be a subject of controversy for more than a century after his death. In matters of practice, and in all those areas which he regarded as belonging to the world of social order and convention, he was prepared to go to all lengths in making things easy for converts, provided that there was no infringement of what he regarded as Christian principle. But in the area of faith and doctrine he is not prepared to yield a single inch. He is from head to foot a post-Tridentine scholastic thinker, with the lucidity which is characteristic of the Italians, but at the same time with a rigidity which no Spaniard could exceed.

Nobili was a man of his own age. He had grown up in an Italy in which dissent had been ruthlessly suppressed. His aristocratic connections were such as to lead to strenuous orthodoxy rather than to independence of thought. The deep devotion by which all his adult life was marked fell well within the strictest limits of counter-reformation piety. The courage with which he faced adversity of many kinds cannot but call out our admiration. The adventurous spirit in which he pioneered new ways of living and studying and proclaiming the Gospel in Indian terms marks him out as one of the great missionaries of all times. Yet his memory is not served by pretending that he was other than he was – great at many points, but at others falling short of the stature of the Master whom he so intensely desired to serve.

### 8 LATER YEARS OF THE MISSION

Our evidences for the history of the Mathurai mission in the second half of the seventeenth century are less adequate than those for the first half, and have been less critically studied. Our main authority is the Annual Letters, which served as the basis for the work of Fr Bertrand. Without these we should be much worse off than we are. But much of the material in these letters consists of stories of remarkable conversions, or marvels wrought on behalf of converts, of response to intercessions directed to particular saints;

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and over all hangs an atmosphere of cloying piety little likely to be agreeable to the taste of a generation trained to view all such records with a certain measure of scepticism.

One narrative of a rather extreme character may be cited as an example of what the reader of these letters may expect:

A catechumen from Paḷaiyaṅkōṭṭai named Rājan was given shelter in the house of Christians at Tenkāsi. He found the family in a state of great distress, since, having already lost one child by death, the parents were standing by the deathbed of a second child. Towards midnight he was awakened by a dazzling light; he got up with a start, intending to call for help since he was convinced that the house was on fire; but he soon realised that the light was of a nature superior to that of fire. He stood still in a state of astonishment, and saw at the foot of a tree planted in the middle of the courtyard two young persons of ravishing beauty, one of whom was waving a kind of small oriflamme, the other holding in his hand a kind of harp . . . They approached the door of the room where the sick child was lying, and leaning against the door called him by his name. The child came out of the room, placed himself between the two unknown visitors, (who took him by the hand and advanced to the middle of the courtyard) holding in his hand two lighted candles and shining with joy and splendour. Then all three rose majestically into the air.<sup>60</sup>

The first and recurrent problem faced by the mission was that of the small number of missionaries employed at any one time. The report for 1666 speaks of five Fathers only. In 1678 there are thirteen residences, but five of these are without resident priests. In the following year the number has gone down to seven, but in 1683 it is up again to nine Fathers in charge of twelve residences.<sup>61</sup> With so serious a shortage of priests, the work came more and more to depend on the services of Indian catechists. Balthasar da Costa, in his first letter from his new field, writes enthusiastically about these colleagues:

To make up for the lack of missionaries we put to service the zeal of our converts, full of eagerness as they are for the propagation of the holy Gospel. We have just set apart a number of them to give themselves wholly to the service of the churches; and, in order that they may devote themselves entirely to this holy work, we give them a small monthly salary for their food and for the maintenance of their families. These are the colleagues whom we call catechists and *paṇḍārams*; this is not something we ourselves have invented; our Fathers have already made excellent use of this method in Japan and elsewhere.<sup>62</sup>

Da Costa gives the names of six of these fellow-workers. The catechists (the name given to those of the higher castes) are Savarirāyan, otherwise known as Peter Xavier; Dairiam, who is distinguished by having a delightful voice; the third Jesu-pattan, whom the Fathers called in Latin Amator; the fourth Xavier, a Veḷḷāḷa; the fifth Yesuadiyān, one of the first Christians from Tiruchirāpalli. The one *paṇḍāram* (that is, worker from the lower

orders of society) is the faithful Muttiuḍaiyān, already known to us as the first Paraiyan baptised by Nobili.<sup>63</sup>

Unfortunately we know less about the work of these friends and servants than we could wish. Clearly they had undergone no formal process of training. They seem to have been selected on the basis of tried devotion and of the respect in which they were held by their fellow-Christians. There were no printed books in Tamil. No doubt these Indian workers had handwritten copies of some Tamil works of Nobili and other Jesuits, especially those manuals which had been specially composed for the edification of Christians. Some are credited with the gift of composing songs in Tamil, and these must have been popular among a music-loving people. One section of Nobili's *Gnānōpathēsam* is taken up with an extended summary of the life of Christ. But, so far as we know, no single chapter of the New Testament had as yet been translated into Tamil. No description of a Christian service conducted by one of these men seems to have survived. Nor do we possess any account written by any of them such as would bring us at first hand into contact with his work.

It must seem strange that, during the entire course of the mission up to the dissolution of the Jesuit order in 1773, not a single candidate for the priesthood was put forward by the Fathers.<sup>64</sup> In the sixteenth century one Brāhman convert, Peter Luis, was, as we have seen, admitted to the Society of Jesus, but after him no other till the nineteenth century. It is true that the great majority of the Christians were extremely poor, and that the resources of the Jesuits were often strained almost beyond bearing. Yet, if from the beginning regular and systematic giving by the believers had been inculcated, the income should have been sufficient to support a network, albeit a fragile one, of Indian priests. A number of the Jesuits were good scholars. There should have been no difficulty in providing training – there were precedents enough in other countries. Celibacy was undoubtedly a great obstacle, since Indians generally marry young, and there is no tradition in India of celibate life.<sup>65</sup> But at least a few might have been found prepared to take on them what at the time would have seemed a heavy yoke.

Time was to show that the policy followed by the Jesuits contained within itself the seeds of disaster. In Paraguay, where the Jesuits ruled without competition for a century and a half, they failed to bring forward a single Amerindian candidate for the priesthood; when they were turned out, the work collapsed and hardly a trace of it remained into modern times. In the same way, when the Jesuits were forced to leave South India, there was no body of well-trained Indian priests to take their place; the French missionaries were far too few to shoulder the burden laid upon them; widespread loss and disintegration were the inevitable result.

With the adoption of the new methods, geographical extension of the

mission was continuous. From about 1649 a congregation had existed at Kayattar, the small city in which at one time the Pāṇḍiyan king had resided, and which lies sixty miles south of Mathurai. From an early date there had been Christians in Vaḍakkankulam,<sup>66</sup> almost on the borders of Travancore and not far from Cape Comorin. Such congregations seem to have come into existence not through extension of work inwards from the coast – there were such extensions but they were limited in their range – but through family connections and the migration of Christians southwards from one area to another.

Growth was most rapid in what the missionaries called the kingdom of Marava, the large area which extends south-eastwards from Mathurai, through the present district of Rāmanāthapuram (Rāmnād) in the direction of Danushkōḍi, the furthest point in India in the direction of Ceylon. This is an area of small towns and villages with no large centre; but the record of baptisms is impressive. By far the larger number of the Christians were from the poorest sections of society; but there were some from higher castes, including Kaḷḷars (the very name means robbers) and Maravas, the often lawless descendants of the soldiers of the *palaiyakkārar*, the marauding chieftains of earlier days.

In Mathurai itself the church seems to have been almost stagnant. Few baptisms in the higher castes were recorded after the death of Nobili. The division between the old church of Fernandes and the new church of Nobili ceased to be as sharp as it had been; relations between the *sannyāsi* priests and those in the service of the older mission improved and there was a mutual exchange of services. But the focal point of the mission had moved irrevocably northwards; the strong points were now Tiruchirāpalli and Sattiamangalam, with one or two other smaller centres.

With not more than ten priests at work at any one time, real pastoral care for so large a flock scattered over so wide an area became almost impossible. The Fathers, with little regard for their health, wore themselves out in constant journeyings. Even so, for most congregations a visit from the Father was as rare an event as a visit from the bishop in more episcopally organised areas. When a Father did arrive, what followed can be described only as an orgy of baptisms, confessions and communions.

For example, John de Britto in a letter of 1683 notes that between St Thomas' day (21 December) and the feast of the Holy Name of Jesus (14 January), he had heard the confession of 1,800 Christians and given them communion.<sup>67</sup> The same missionary, in a letter of the year 1681 mentions that at Gingi, where the hills are crowned to this day with the immense fortifications of an earlier age, 'I heard the confessions of more than 4,000 Christians, and gave them communion, and carried out more than 300 baptisms.' All this had been going on throughout Lent; still, in the time

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available it cannot have been possible to give detailed attention to any one penitent, or to give more than the most summary advice.<sup>68</sup> This is confirmed by a report on the work of the greatly loved and respected Fr Francis Laynez, later bishop of Mylapore.<sup>69</sup> Although he sat in the confessional for thirteen hours a day, he cannot have allocated on an average more than four minutes to any one penitent. It is, nevertheless, clear that the Christians greatly valued the opportunity of making confession and receiving absolution at the hands of the priest.

The story of the Mathurai mission through these years is punctuated by the endless series of local wars between the petty chieftains and rulers of the area, evidence of the inability of the Great Mogul far away in Delhi to exercise control over these distant regions which were still technically part of his dominions. At such times the sufferings of the underdog are bound to be very great. It is not clear whether the Christians were actually worse off than their Hindu neighbours; but the Jesuit letters, not unnaturally, are full of tales of persecution often valiantly endured.

There were, indeed, a number of reasons which might draw down upon the Christians and those who supported them the hostility of these local rulers. In some cases the very success of the Jesuits was the cause of their unpopularity. The Brāhmins could not but view with distaste those who were withdrawing part of the Hindu flock from its allegiance; and, though their disdain for the outcastes was such that the loss of them all might have seemed a matter of small moment to them, there were enough conversions from among the higher castes to make it appear at times that the whole fabric of the Hindu world was being shaken. As for the ordinary people, the simple fact that the Christians were different and did not follow the old-established ways was enough to bring upon them suspicion and dislike, and these could easily at times take the form of violence.

It would not be correct to speak of organised persecution. The outbreaks were sporadic and unpredictable. One area might be in the grip of violence, while another not far away was enjoying a period of quiet rest. Violence, having suddenly broken out, might as suddenly die away, to break out again unpredictably in some other area. Yet with it all the work of the mission went forward without long interruption, with occasional apostasies, but nowhere with anything like collapse.

One feature in this story is notable – that, though the missionaries lacked protection and were as much at the mercy of their foes as any member of their flock, in very few cases did their enemies proceed to extremities against them. Some were arrested, imprisoned, even at times subjected to violence. But deliverance seemed invariably to come, sometimes in most unexpected

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ways, attributable in the minds of the faithful only to the direct interposition of God on their behalf. The case of John de Britto, who was beheaded on 4 February 1693, is exceptional.

We have more information about de Britto than about any other missionary of the seventeenth century, with the single exception of Nobili. This is due partly to his membership in a noble Portuguese family, and to the care with which members of the family preserved the records concerning him;<sup>70</sup> partly to the charm and ability with which he carried out the work of a missionary; partly to the romance of his martyrdom and to the halo which this cast on his memory. There are many legendary elements in the records; but, when all these have been allowed for, we find ourselves in contact with a real historical person.

John de Britto was born in Portugal in 1647, the third son of his parents. When little more than a child he was introduced to the court as one of the royal pages, and entered on a particularly close friendship with Prince Peter, later to succeed to the throne as King Peter II. Twenty-five years later the king had no hesitation in renewing the friendship of boyhood days, showed great respect for the now experienced missionary, and did his utmost to retain his services for Portugal.

John early showed a deep concern for religion. It was no surprise to his family when he applied for membership in the Society of Jesus and was accepted. He seemed to have a natural affinity for the Jesuit manner of life, and passed without difficulty through the rigorous tests and disciplines of the novitiate. He had had thoughts of offering for the mission in China. But the letters of Balthasar da Costa and his burning appeals for recruits to serve in the terribly understaffed mission of Mathurai deflected his attention to India. Da Costa was in Lisbon in 1673. Britto, having been ordained priest, joined the party which da Costa was personally to conduct to India.

The voyage was terrible. A violent epidemic fever broke out and da Costa himself was one of the victims. Britto, whose own health had been so frail as to make it uncertain whether he could be accepted as a missionary, somehow survived, and arrived in Goa in September 1673, considerably worn by the labours which he had endured on the voyage as medical attendant and spiritual healer.

From Goa Britto was sent to the seminary at Ambalakkādu in Kerala, and after a short stay there was able to make his way through the mountains to the territory of the Mathurai mission, accompanied by the experienced Fr Antony Freyre.<sup>71</sup>

Britto settled in happily to the work of the mission. He seemed to have a natural aptitude for its ways, and adapted himself to the hardships of the life

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of a *paṇḍaraswāmi* without such struggles as are recorded of many of his brethren. But he was the kind of man to attract adventures to himself and his missionary life was far from being tranquil or monotonous.

Soon after his arrival he had settled in a small village named Tattuvanchēri, not far from the northern bank of the river Coleroon. This was a quiet place, 'which offers to the missionary two precious advantages—a little safety from the troubles of the war, and full freedom to deal with the Paraiyas, the care of whom is so difficult under the eyes of the Brāhmins in the big cities'.<sup>72</sup> In ordinary years the village, distant about two miles from the river, was not held to be in any danger from floods. But in 1676 the rains were exceptionally heavy. On the night of 17 December Britto was awakened by the loud cries of his flock, and within a short time found himself up to his armpits in water:

I made my way to the little wood; I fought against the current; I took hold of the hedges, the thorns of which tore my hands and my whole body, and eventually arrived at the top of the little hill . . . Eight of the Christians came to join me . . . Before long the sun rose, and showed us the full horror of the sights which surrounded us—a shoreless ocean, above which rose at various distances the summits of hills and the tops of trees.<sup>73</sup>

One of the Christians, more venturesome than the rest, swam across to the presbytery and recovered a quantity of rice; the refugees were able to light a fire and prepare themselves a meal. After that their main anxiety concerned the multitude of snakes, which, driven from their usual dwellings, had like the humans sought refuge on the hill and hung menacingly suspended from the trees. After three days the waters subsided and the Christians were able to come down from their hill without loss of life, to face nothing worse than the extreme humidity of the atmosphere and a piercing wind against which they had no adequate protection. It is not surprising that they celebrated the rites of Christmas with more than ordinary thankfulness.

Britto showed himself a completely devoted missionary. The records of the next ten years, in so far as we have them,<sup>74</sup> are full of stories of his heroic wanderings, his disregard of danger, the multitude of conversions brought about by his ministry, and the many marvels attributed to his holiness and his prayers. Much of the work was carried out in the Marava area, newly opened to the work of the mission, where the dangers were great as were also the opportunities for successful evangelisation. In 1682 Britto was appointed superior of the mission.

The year 1686 brought a crisis in the affairs of the mission. The Brāhmins believed that no missionary was at large in the Marava country. They were furious to learn that Britto was in the province, making converts and strengthening the faith of the Christians. They succeeded in July of that



year in securing his arrest, together with two catechists and three other Christians. The next fifteen days were a time of great trial in which all were subjected to grievous bodily hurt. All endured patiently, with the exception of one whose faith was not strong enough. Britto fully expected that the sentence of death would be carried out upon them; but suddenly the wind changed. It seems that the king of Marava had been much impressed by the fortitude of the Christians; he now gave them their liberty on condition that they did not attempt again to preach their strange doctrines in his dominions.<sup>75</sup>

Britto was not the man to lie down under intimidation. After being absent in Portugal for nearly three years on the business of the society, shortly after his return he set out again for the Marava country. He managed to secure a house just on the edge of the territories of the king but on the land of a friendly prince. It seems that Raghunātha Thēvar, the ruler of Marava commonly known as *Kilavan*, 'the old man', was prepared to overlook his presence, until a crisis arose through the conversion of a near relative of the king whose name is given in the sources as Taḍiya Thēvar. Like most of the rulers of that time this man was a polygamist; unlike most of them he was prepared to show the sincerity of his conversion by putting away all the secondary wives and retaining only the first. Unfortunately the youngest of the wives, Kaḍalai, was a niece of Raghunātha Thēvar, who, furious at the insult to his family, decided on the death of the missionary whom he naturally and rightly regarded as responsible for the actions of Taḍiya Thēvar.

Attempts to kill the offender by magic and sorcery having failed, the king, who still hesitated to put the missionary to death in his own city, sent him away to his brother Uriya Thēvar, the governor of Uraiṅṅur, on the pretence that he was only sentencing Britto to exile. But Uriya Thēvar knew well what was expected of him and prepared to carry out what he knew to be the wishes of his brother. On 3 February 1693, Britto, whose captivity was less rigid than might have been expected, managed to smuggle out letters to the Jesuit John da Costa, and to Fr Laynez the future bishop of Mylapore; he knew well that he was writing under the very shadow of death. On the next day he was led out to die. At the third blow of a scimitar the head was completely severed from the body. The hands and feet were cut off and bound to the body, which was then attached to a tall post.<sup>76</sup>

This is one of the very few cases in the history of the Indian church of the execution of a missionary after judicial or quasi-judicial process. Many have lost their lives in casual violence and at the hands of robbers and pirates. But the story of Britto stands almost without parallel. It is unlikely that Raghunātha Thēvar would have proceeded to such extremes, had it not been for the element of personal pique over the insult to his family. In the

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disturbed state of the country he must have been confident that no European authority would have either the power or the concern to take vengeance for the death of one who by all European standards was innocent of any crime.<sup>77</sup>

### 9 SOME CONCLUSIONS

To estimate the number of converts and Christians in the Mathurai mission in the various stages of its evolution is an exceedingly difficult task. For a number of years the Annual Letters are missing. Statistics of baptisms are usually given in round numbers. Only rarely are the figures for adults and for infants given separately, and the infants baptised *in articulo mortis* may have been included in the general figure. In some cases it is not clear whether the figure is intended to cover all baptisms since the creation of the mission, or only those still alive at the time of writing. All this being so, it is not possible to give more than a tentative estimate of the success of the mission at any one time, or of the total achievement during the first century of its existence.

The number of baptisms from the highest castes always remained very small. Even from other castes, large figures of conversions begin to be given only after the inauguration of the new methods under the lead of Fr Balthasar da Costa.

The Annual Letter for 1643 states that from the beginning of the mission in 1606 not more than 600 converts of higher caste had been baptised. Considering the total lack of success before the time of Robert Nobili, this must be regarded as in itself a very considerable achievement.

In 1644, however, a more hopeful picture is drawn. The total number of Christians connected with the mission is now nearly 4,000. In Mathurai and its surroundings there are 320 Christians of higher caste; but to these must be added another thousand in Tiruchirāpaḷli, Thaṅjāvur and Sattiamangalam, and a further 2,500 under the care of the *paṇḍāraswāmis*.

Rather more than twenty years later, in 1676, the number had risen to 50,000, though the total number of baptisms since the mission was founded exceeds 60,000. Only two years later, in 1678, it is stated that the number of Christians now exceeds 70,000 in the kingdoms of Mathurai, Thaṅjāvur, Gingi and Vellore – a clear indication that the figure is approximate rather than accurate.

The letters from 1688 to 1707 are missing; but there are hints from time to time of very large numbers of baptisms, especially during the period of the ministry of John de Britto. In a letter of 1699 Fr Peter Martins refers to the adherents of the mission as now numbering 150,000. This is possible if we allow for 5,000 baptisms every year in the last quarter of the century; in the

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scattered reports that have come down to us this number is exceeded in a number of years. But prudence suggests that there may be a considerable measure of exaggeration in these figures, and that a number of factors may have contributed to inflation of them. A safer estimate might be 100,000.<sup>78</sup>

Even if we take as acceptable the lowest possible estimate, it is certain that a memorable movement had taken place. Some observers, such as the Abbé J.A. Dubois writing a century later, when conditions of Christian work in India had become much more difficult, held the view that the seventeenth century had been the great time for conversions, a time that in all probability would never recur.

To make an estimate of the number of Christians is temerarious. To attempt to calculate the percentage of the population which had been reached by the Christian message must be even more hazardous, since we have hardly any data on which the population of India at that time can be reckoned with any degree of accuracy. The population of the area touched by the work of the mission of Mathurai can hardly have been less, three centuries ago, than six million. If that were so, we may guess that between one and two per cent of the population had become Christian, and that the lower figure is more probable than the higher. Certainly a great many more knew, for good or ill, that something called the Christian faith existed, though their ideas as to its nature were in some cases rudimentary and distorted. But of the many who heard the great majority remained unconvinced. The enthusiastic reception by the few was balanced by the firm and uncompromising resolve of the great majority of the population of South India to have nothing to do with the Gospel. The Christian road in India has always been an uphill road.

## 13 · The Thomas Christians Again

### I FRANCIS ROZ AND A CROWN OF THORNS

Francis Roz SJ had been installed in glory as the first Latin bishop of the Serra and of the Thomas Christians. It was not long before he discovered that he had inherited a crown of thorns.

Roz had lived long among the Thomas Christians and understood their ways. He had taken the trouble to learn both Syriac and Malayalam. He was upright, diligent and considerate. Yet with all this he was a Latin of the Latins; and like all the Latins he made the mistake of gravely underestimating the attachment of the people to their old ways, and their profound consciousness of being an Eastern and not a Western church.

The conservatism of the Christians was incarnate in the person of the archdeacon, Parambil George, sometimes called George da Cruz. In the days of the Mesopotamian bishops the diocese had really been ruled by the archdeacon. The bishop was a somewhat remote and patriarchal figure, regarded by the people with almost exaggerated reverence; but in practice his functions were more or less limited to baptisms, ordinations and other specifically episcopal ministrations. The administration of the diocese, including the selection of candidates suitable for ordination, was in the hands of the archdeacon.<sup>1</sup>

George had a special reason for being resolved to maintain all the rights and the privileges of his office undiminished. He had been put forward for consecration as coadjutor to the aged Mar Abraham, and on the death of that prelate had been entrusted with the administration of the diocese. It is probable, though not certain, that he regarded himself as the natural successor to the office of bishop. He knew that he could count on a considerable measure of support among the priests and the lay people, who regarded him as the guardian of their national honour and independence.

Roz came to his office with the post-Tridentine concept of the episcopal office. All authority was to be concentrated in his hands, all others were to work as his deputies, and to exercise authority only in so far as they were commissioned to do by the bishop.

With such diametrically opposed ideas as to the nature of authority in the church, it was inevitable that clashes and controversies should break out between the two men. The archdeacon's understanding of the situation was quite clear; he would not yield an inch in anything related to the prerogatives of his church, and of himself as its representative. This was the one constant amid all the shifts and manoeuvres of policy which led his opponents to accuse him of tergiversation and dishonesty.

The first crisis arose over the title conferred on Roz. He was to be bishop of Ankamāli and suffragan of the archbishop of Goa. This was wholly unacceptable to the Thomas Christians.<sup>2</sup> Their bishop had always had the title of metropolitan. He stood in the same relation to the patriarch of Babylon as Menezes to the bishop of Rome, but he had never been subject to any other prelate in the East. When they had accepted a Latin bishop, they had not foreseen this consequence of their submission. To accept the universal headship of the pope did not, in their eyes, involve the acceptance of any papal representative as standing between him and them.

Roz was wise enough to see that they had grounds for their complaint. The diocese of Ankamāli was raised to the dignity of an archbishopric. This had a mollifying effect. But had it been made clear that the partial subjection of the Serra to the see of Goa had been completely done away?<sup>3</sup>

In 1605 Roz made the grave mistake of securing from the pope permission to move the seat of the archbishopric from Ankamāli to Cranganore (Koṭuñal!ṭr). The ground on which the decision was taken was that Ankamāli was in the territory of a Hindu ruler, and that the archbishop would be gravely hindered in the exercise of his duties by the caprices and aggressions of such rulers. Cranganore, being a Portuguese fortress, would be a far safer centre of operation.<sup>4</sup> The decision was not agreeable to the Thomas Christians. Ankamāli had been for centuries the residence of the metropolitan, and they saw no compelling reason for the change. And by making the change Roz landed himself in dissensions with his neighbour the bishop of Cochin, dissensions which are among the most painful and ridiculous in the whole history of the church.

The system of dual jurisdiction was bound to cause difficulties. The bishop of Cochin was a bishop of the Latin rite. The diocese had been founded to care for the Portuguese and for those under their protection, and for such converts as might be won to the faith by missionaries from the West. This bishop claimed no jurisdiction over the Thomas Christians, and Roz could not claim any jurisdiction over Latin Christians. But the demarcation of boundaries was not easy. The bishop of Cochin was the chief shepherd of the mission on the Fişher Coast. But, as the mission of Mathurai came into separate existence, it was entrusted to the care of the archbishop of Cranganore. Roz thus found himself, in addition to all his

### *The Thomas Christians Again*

other cares, involved in all the controversies of which Robert Nobili was the centre. In many places Latin and Eastern lived in close propinquity, and both tended to look for help to whichever bishop was nearest.<sup>5</sup>

Roz's move to Cranganore was beyond all doubt tactless, and could easily be regarded by the bishop of Cochin, Andrew of Saint Mary, who ruled that diocese from 1588 to 1615, as an act of aggression on his rights and his territories. At first the two bishops were on excellent terms, but it was almost impossible that tensions should not arise. Most of the alleged causes were trivial, but the wounds went deep, and it was long before the enmity was healed. The bishop of Cochin was a man of choleric temper and of extremely resolute will. He managed to quarrel with many people, and with the Jesuits at every point. Roz writes about this again and again, and perhaps with pardonable indignation. For instance in a letter 15 December 1611 to the general of the society, he writes, 'with bishops as ignorant as they are, and above all contrary to the privileges of the Religious to whom they are very ill disposed, what can we do?'. And again, 'the bishops of Mylapore, Malacca and Cochin are of one mind against the society. They are not animated by the spirit of God but by that of the devil.'<sup>6</sup>

It is not necessary to go into all the details of this highly unedifying story.<sup>7</sup> In September 1608 the pope wrote to the bishop of Cochin in terms of dignified reproof. If he has any fault to find with the priests of the Society of Jesus, let him notify the prelates of that order, and at the same time send information to Rome.<sup>8</sup>

Francis Roz was no more successful in his handling of the affairs of the archdeacon. George had succeeded in getting a measure of support from the bishop of Cochin; and the regard in which he was held by the Thomas Christians was undiminished. But Roz, who had come to believe that George was not merely opposed to him personally but was planning a revolt in the church and a return to the allegiance of the patriarch of Babylon, in 1610 decided to excommunicate him. Secure in the protection afforded by his friends and relations George took no notice of the excommunication. Then, in a sudden *volte face*, in 1615 he decided to make his submission, and was relieved of the sentence of excommunication. In the same year he wrote to Fr Vitteleschi, the Jesuit general, a letter of enthusiastic commendation of the work of the Jesuits, and of gratitude for all that they had achieved.<sup>9</sup>

It seemed that peace had at last been secured. But this was too good to last. The next collision was caused by grossly provocative action on the part of Roz. In 1618 he had occasion to go to Goa in company with Robert Nobili. He decided to appoint as vicar general, to take charge of the diocese in his absence, the rector of the Jesuit college at Vaippikkotta.<sup>10</sup> This was an open and unmistakable insult to the archdeacon, whose claims were thus set on one side; the insult was never forgiven. George withdrew all pretence of

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obedience to the archbishop and was followed by a considerable section of the church. Jesuits, especially Fr Campari and Fr Fenicio, and even Stephen de Britto, who in 1620 had been appointed coadjutor and successor to Roz, pleaded with him to adopt a milder tone in his dealings with the archdeacon, but without success. In a letter of 1622 Roz writes that he has known the archdeacon for thirty-nine years, ever since his first arrival in India, and that through all these years he has remained unaltered; kindness has had no effect on him, he is incorrigible.

At the very last moment Roz relented. The bulls which would have made possible the succession of Stephen de Britto to the see having been lost by shipwreck, it was essential to appoint a diocesan administrator, to make sure that, in the event of the death of Roz, a pretender from the church of Babylon did not insinuate himself into the diocese and win away the Thomas Christians from their allegiance to Rome. With the death of Roz on 18 February 1624, the archdeacon found himself for the first time in independent control of the church of the Serra. He at once set himself with commendable zeal to bring to an end the schism which he himself had brought into being, and to remove causes of disunion and dispute. So, when Britto was able at last to take possession of his see, the archdeacon was in a position to present to him a church free from all dissension and schism, and to offer to him an enthusiastic welcome.<sup>11</sup>

### 2 ARCHBISHOP AND ARCHDEACON

At first all seemed to go well. The Jesuit Annual Letter for 1626 reports that 'the most reverend archbishop of Cranganore, who is staying with us . . . gives numerous proofs of humility and of all virtues. He lives in peace and harmony with the archdeacon.'

Some judged this friendship of the archbishop with the archdeacon to be of excellent augury; others felt that it could not but lead to disaster. The new policy was that of clemency and kindness by which Britto believed that he could gain far more than by severity; others thought that clemency would merely encourage the archdeacon in his perversity. What was not realised at this time was that, under all his kindness, Britto was still maintaining all the claims that Roz had made for the episcopate.

The outward show of friendship did not last very long. In 1630 Britto writes to the archbishop of Goa:

Now during the six years that I have governed this church, in spite of the fact that I have always done all in my power to conciliate him in everything that was not against my conscience, I find him as rebellious and as little submissive as he has ever been in the past. Several times already I have been on the point of breaking with him, unable to suffer any longer his innumerable lies, and the wickedness with which he pursues me without rime or reason.<sup>12</sup>

### *The Thomas Christians Again*

In 1628, without the knowledge of the archbishop, the archdeacon had written a strong letter to the papal legate in Lisbon, the *collector apostolicus*, strongly criticising the Jesuits for their high-handed actions in the Serra, and urging that the next archbishop should not be a Jesuit. He put forward the name of Fr Francis Donati, a Dominican, for appointment as coadjutor to the archbishop. The collector forwarded the letter to the Propaganda in Rome, and there was a good deal of feeling in favour of the appointment of Donati. But it was recognised that the *padroado* would stand in the way; as Donati was not a Portuguese, there was no likelihood that the king of Portugal would approve the nomination.<sup>13</sup>

In 1634 Donati was on his way back to Rome, when he was captured by pirates and put to death. This was a grave loss to the church. Paulinus expresses the opinion that, if he had been appointed as coadjutor to Britto, schism in the church might never have taken place.

Undeterred by his failure in 1628, in 1632 the archdeacon wrote a long letter to the king of Spain and Portugal, in which among other things he accused the Jesuits of withholding the amounts due to the *cattanārs* from the resources of the Portuguese crown.<sup>14</sup>

One great success the archdeacon had scored in the later years of Britto as archbishop. At some point of time, and in some manner (when and how is not clear), he had persuaded the archbishop to sign a document, in which he gave back to the archdeacon practically all the powers which he had claimed, and which made him virtually ruler of the church of the Serra. For the future the archbishop was not to confer holy orders, appoint priests to parishes, excommunicate or suspend delinquent priests or laymen, in fact not to do anything of importance, without the consent of the archdeacon. Britto soon realised that he had made a grave mistake. In 1636 an attempt was made to recover the compromising documents from the archdeacon. But, though George surrendered copies, he was careful to keep the originals in his own hands.<sup>15</sup>

Both the protagonists were now old and tired, the archdeacon eighty or more, Britto over seventy. There seems to have been an unspoken agreement between them that they would not quarrel any more. The last few years of their respective lives were passed in peace. When George died on 25 July 1640,<sup>16</sup> Britto appointed as his successor his nephew Parambil Tumi, known to the Portuguese as Thomas de Campo. On 3 December 1641 Britto followed the old archdeacon to the grave.

Thomas, who seems to have been less than thirty years old at the time of his appointment, was the object of a great deal of vituperation during his lifetime and after his death. It was affirmed that he was addicted to drinking, and that when he was in seminary his chastity was not above suspicion. He was, added his enemies, an ignorant priest; all that he knew was a certain



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amount of Syriac.<sup>17</sup> But his critics soon came to realise that he had the same determined character as his uncle, and at least equal skill in diplomacy and in the managing of situations. The chronicler was well inspired to write 'de tal ovo nacque simil corvo' ('from such an egg was born a similar crow').

Before the appointment of Thomas, the authorities had made another of their grievous mistakes. They had chosen as Britto's coadjutor and successor Fr Francis Garcia SJ. Garcia's portrait, as reproduced in Fr Thekedatu's book, shows the face of an inquisitor; the thin lips pursed almost in a scowl suggest a character entirely devoid of flexibility or humour, obstinate rather than resolute, narrow, persistent and unforgiving.

Garcia was fifty-seven years old at the time of his consecration.<sup>18</sup> He had been in India for twenty-five years, and had spent much of his time as a teacher of theology. But his experience of the south was limited to two years on the Fisher Coast and two in Cochin. From the start doubts began to be felt as to his suitability for the work to which he had been called. Stephen de Britto, not an uncharitable man, wrote on hearing of his appointment (1 January 1633):

I am glad, for he has great qualities, and henceforth I can be at peace with regard to the future of this church. But I would have been happier, had he been younger, so as to be able to learn the language, and to acquire some experience of this people, so different from the rest . . . I am at peace with my archdeacon, and I wish to keep it so at all costs, for the spiritual good of this church, whatever annoyance he may give me. For I have a long experience of the evils that will befall otherwise.<sup>19</sup>

Fr Thekedatu sums up the situation succinctly and accurately: 'Between the harsh and intransigent Garcia and the unscrupulous and resolute Thomas there was hardly any possibility for a reasonable and lasting compromise.'<sup>20</sup>

Each of the contestants could count on certain factors favourable to his cause. The archdeacon knew that there was a strong conviction, or at least prejudice, in his favour in the minds of almost all the Thomas Christians. The local rulers were likely to be friendly to claims for ecclesiastical independence, as against the Portuguese whom they still regarded as intruders. The bishop of Cochin, always at loggerheads with his brother of Cranganore, could be relied on to take the side of anyone who was in opposition to Garcia. The steady advance of the Dutch was weakening the power of the Portuguese; if the Protestants arrived in strength, it might be possible to manoeuvre them into supporting the enemies of their enemies. On the side of Garcia, there was the great advantage that the Portuguese authorities, whether civil or ecclesiastical, were in the nature of the case almost bound to support one of their own. Garcia had managed to secure for

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himself almost complete financial control in the Serra. And the inveterate respect of the Thomas Christians for bishops was a strong card in the hand of the only man who could claim in any sense to be the bishop of the Serra.

In 1645 the Portuguese viceroy, who was on his way from Ceylon to Goa, succeeded in bringing together the various parties to the dispute and in effecting some kind of a reconciliation between them. On 12 December of that year Garcia drew up a document which was alleged to safeguard the rights of the archdeacon, and Thomas was induced to sign it. But in point of fact the document gave very little away. The third article read that 'before the archbishop hands over to the vicars the papers of their appointment, these papers will be passed to the archdeacon, who will without demur affix his signature. But even if he refuses to sign these papers, the vicars will all the same take possession of their parishes and govern them.'<sup>21</sup> In the statement made a little later Garcia affirmed that none of the concessions made to the archdeacon referred to matters of jurisdiction.<sup>22</sup>

Thomas was fully equal to the situation. No sooner was the agreement signed than he sent to all the churches copies of a carefully doctored version of what had been agreed. On the main point at issue the Malayalam version read: 'When it is a question of conferring orders or appointing vicars or doing any other business, it has been agreed that nothing can be done unless the archbishop and I get together to treat of them.' This was certainly not the way in which Garcia understood the document.

In 1647 Garcia made the same mistake as had been made before him by Roz. He appointed one Fr Jerome Furtado as his vicar general. This was, and was felt to be, the gravest possible insult to the archdeacon, who had throughout history been regarded as *legatus natus*, and this was never forgiven.<sup>23</sup>

By this time Thomas had come to the conclusion that no remedy for the ills from which the Thomas Christians were suffering would be effective, other than the arrival of an Eastern bishop of the tradition to which they had been accustomed through the centuries. He took the unusual step of writing to the Coptic patriarch in Alexandria, the Jacobite (Monophysite) patriarch of Antioch, and the Nestorian patriarch of Babylon, asking them to provide the necessary help. Not unnaturally no answer was received to any of the letters.<sup>24</sup>

### 3 REBELLION AND SCHISM

In 1652 the entire situation was changed by the arrival in India of an oriental bishop named Ahatallah.<sup>25</sup> This man had made his way to Surat, where he introduced himself to the Capuchin missionaries. Then, fearing that he might be handed over to the Inquisition, he managed to steal away from

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Surat in a Dutch ship, avoided Goa and Cochin, and made his way to Mylapore, which he reached probably in August 1652.<sup>26</sup> Suspicions as to his orthodoxy having already arisen, he was apprehended and committed to the custody of the Jesuits, who, however, treated him kindly and placed few restrictions on his freedom. This made it possible for him to make the acquaintance of three clerics from Malabar, one of whom, Zachariah Cherian Unni, was reported as having spent much time in conversation with him. When the three returned to Kerala, they carried with them a letter from Ahatallah to the heads of the Thomas Christians.

Ahatallah remains a somewhat mysterious figure. But the main outlines of his story have been built up from materials in the archives in Rome and Goa, and can be regarded as somewhat reliably established.<sup>27</sup> Ahatallah was born in Aleppo in 1590. Sometime before 1632 he was elected monophysite bishop of Damascus. While there, he made his submission to Rome, and arrived in Rome itself about the middle of the year 1632. During the year and more that he spent in Rome he learned to speak Italian fluently. He asked to be sent back to his own country, promising that he would bring the patriarch Hidayat Allah over to the Roman obedience. What follows is obscure. Ahatallah apparently claimed that, after the death of Hidayat Allah, he himself had been elected patriarch and given the title Ignatius, which has been borne by all the Jacobite patriarchs of the East. Since Turkish opposition made it impossible for him to take up this post, he had been despatched to Persia to care for the churches there. At that time there was no bishop of the Latin rite in that area. It appears that in 1646 Ahatallah was in Egypt, and from there wrote to Propaganda. While he was waiting in Cairo for an answer to his letter, the letter from Thomas to the Coptic patriarch arrived. The patriarch, having no one else to send, seems to have suggested to Ahatallah that he might undertake the important work of looking after the Christians of the Serra. Having nothing else to do, Ahatallah gladly accepted this commission.

While in Mylapore, Ahatallah put it about that his full title was 'Ignatius, patriarch of the whole of India and of China', and that he had come with full powers from the pope. There is no reason to doubt that he really was a bishop, a Jacobite whose submission had been accepted by the Roman authorities. It is unlikely that he had received any regular commission from the patriarch of Alexandria, who in any case would have had no right to issue a commission for lands under the jurisdiction of another patriarch. It can be taken as certain that Ahatallah had received no authorisation from the pope for any kind of work in the Serra. It would be unfair to describe him simply as an impostor, but his claims to authority were at least exaggerated; his status in the Serra could not be other than irregular.

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What Archdeacon Thomas had longed for, and had thought could never happen, had happened. He at once sent word to all the churches that a prelate had been sent to them from an Eastern church, but that the Jesuits were preventing him from coming to the Serra. He was so far right that, apparently, the Jesuits had planned that Ahatallah should be sent to Goa, where his claims could be thoroughly sifted by the Inquisition and a decision given.

Word reached the Serra that the Portuguese fleet had left Mylapore with Ahatallah on board. The expectation was that it would touch at Cochin; then the people would be able to see their long-awaited bishop, and there was at least a possibility that a solution would be found for all their problems. It might well seem reasonable that the bishop should be allowed to land, and that his claims should be put to the test. In point of fact, it seems that both the archbishop and the archdeacon were unwilling to face a public investigation of the bishop's claims, but for precisely opposite reasons – Thomas because he feared that the bishop might prove to be a fraud, and the archbishop because he feared that Ahatallah might be genuine. Thomas was no fool; he must have spotted the improbabilities in Ahatallah's story. Tales were still circulating in the Serra about wandering bishops and all the troubles that they had caused. Garcia must have been even more deeply suspicious. But he knew that complaints had gone into Rome about his high-handed administration of the affairs of the Serra, and in particular of his refusal to obey the papal ruling that other orders besides the Jesuits should be admitted to the area. It was unlikely that Rome would send any bishop otherwise than through the regular channels, namely the king of Portugal and the authorities in Goa. But Rome, as he well knew, was capable of meeting high-handedness with high-handedness; it was just possible that the unexpected had happened, and that Ahatallah would be able to produce genuine credentials from Rome. If so, what was to become of the monarchical rule of Garcia in the Serra?

In the midst of these confused alarms the captain of the fleet cut the Gordian knot by deciding that the ships should not enter the harbour of Cochin, and that there could be no question of a passenger destined for Goa being allowed to land even for a time.

This may have eased the situation for the moment. Actually, it was the worst thing that the Portuguese could have done. The Thomas Christians were well aware of the passionate determination of the Portuguese that there should be no contact between the church in India and the ancient church of the East, and of the vigilance with which they watched the ports to make sure that no cleric from Babylon or those parts should ever enter India. When their promised bishop had been so near and was now so far away, they were prepared to believe the worst. They did believe the worst. For many

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long years the Thomas Christians were convinced that the Portuguese had murdered Ahatallah.

One rumour which circulated among them was that to get rid of him the Portuguese had drowned him in the harbour of Cochin, before the fleet ever sailed for Goa.<sup>28</sup> Even the usually reliable Müllbauer gave currency to the story that he had been put on trial by the Inquisition in Goa, and after being convicted of heresy had been condemned to be burned at the stake. He writes that, 'after he had stood trial, somewhere about the year 1654, he was condemned to the flames and burned'.<sup>29</sup> Müllbauer has been followed uncritically by one writer after another, and this death by fire has become part of the Ahatallah legend.<sup>30</sup>

The facts about Ahatallah are less hair-raising than tradition has made them out to be. Like other bishops suspected of irregularity of heresy, he seems to have been packed off from Goa to Lisbon, *en route* for Rome where his case could be heard and decided. But in all probability he never reached Rome, having died in Paris (1654) on the way.<sup>31</sup>

The dismay of the people on hearing that their bishop had been snatched away from them knew no bounds. This is pathetically expressed in a letter from the *cattanārs* and people to the captain of Cochin:

in case the patriarch cannot be produced, he having been killed by the Paulists [Jesuits], let any other person of the four religious orders come here by order of the supreme pontiff, a man who knows Syriac, and can teach us in our offices, except the Paulists, whom we do not at all desire, because they are enemies of us and of the church of Rome; with that exception let anybody come, and we are ready to obey without hesitation.<sup>32</sup>

The Thomas Christians made one more attempt to reach some kind of compromise before proceeding to extreme measures. They wrote to Garcia, requesting him to come and meet them; but they did add the sinister warning that, if he did not accede to their petition, they would no longer regard him as their shepherd but would choose another archbishop to care for their spiritual welfare. Garcia summarily refused to accept the invitation.

This was the last straw. On 3 January 1653 priests and people assembled in the church of Our Lady at Maṭṭāncēri, and standing in front of a crucifix and lighted candles swore upon the holy Gospel that they would no longer obey Garcia, and that they would have nothing further to do with the Jesuits; they would recognise the archdeacon as the governor of their church. This is the famous oath of the 'Koonen Cross' (the open-air Cross which stands outside the church at Maṭṭāncēri), which to this day all members of the independent Malankara church of Kerala regard as the moment at which their church recovered its independence and returned to its own true nature.<sup>33</sup>

### *The Thomas Christians Again*

The Thomas Christians did not at any point suggest that they wished to separate themselves from the pope. They could no longer tolerate the arrogance of Garcia. And their detestation of the Jesuits, to whose overbearing attitude and lack of sympathy they attributed all their troubles, breathes through all the documents of the time. But let the pope send them a true bishop not a Jesuit, and they will be pleased to receive and obey him.

At this point there comes on the scene the sinister figure of the *cattanār* Anjilimoothil Ittithommen, one of the senior priests, at that time about sixty-seven years old, who could remember the days of Mar Abraham – the good old days before the synod of Diamper had taken away all the liberties of the Thomas Christians. Our sources, all from the Roman Catholic side, have no good word to say of this man; but, even when allowance has been made for the contemporary habit of vilification, it is not easy to believe that the *cattanār* was a man of integrity. It was he, if report is to be believed, who put it into the minds of the people that, now that they had a governor of their own race, there was no need for them to look further afield. Why should not the archdeacon be invested with the episcopal dignity, and with the power to do all that had been done by their Eastern bishops in the past? The archdeacon would need documents in support of his claims. But documents could be produced. It was one of the merits of Ittithommen, if it was a merit, that he was exceptionally skilled in the Syriac language. There can be little doubt that he forged two important documents, and passed them off on the Thomas Christians as having come from Ahatallah.

The first of these documents granted to the archdeacon all the powers of the archbishop in regard to dispensations for marriage – a most important matter in that part of the world; also the power to absolve from ecclesiastical censures. Nothing was said of the right to ordain. The letter was read at Itapalli on 5 February 1653. On hearing it, a vast crowd enthusiastically welcomed Thomas as the governor of the church of the Serra. Four of the *cattanārs* were appointed to form the council of the diocese.<sup>34</sup>

At a further meeting held at Ālangāt, on 22 May 1653, a much more explicit letter was read, and this completed the work. The pseudo-Ahatallah now affirmed that, in the absence of a bishop, twelve of the *cattanārs* might lay their hands on Thomas, and that this would be adequate as episcopal consecration. The basis for this affirmation was what we are told by Jerome was the ancient custom of the church of Alexandria. There, when the patriarch died, the twelve priests of the city churches would elect one of their number as patriarch; the eleven would then lay hands on the elected person and thus consecrate him as their patriarch, and would also immediately elect another presbyter, so that the college should never consist of less than twelve persons. How Ittithommen knew of this custom it is vain to speculate.<sup>35</sup> Some raised doubts as to the validity of this unusual

### *Attempts at Reconciliation*

consecration, but in the general enthusiasm their doubts were stilled, and the consecration took place in the manner prescribed by the pseudo-Ahatallah. At the moment of consecration the letter, supposedly from Ahatallah, was laid on the head of Thomas as a sign of authorisation and approval.<sup>36</sup>

The next step was to inform all the churches of what had taken place, and to rally them in support of the new bishop. Some withheld their consent – the numbers given by our various authorities differ, but it is clear that the vast majority approved of what had been done. For the first time in history the Thomas Christians had a bishop from among their own people, and chosen by themselves. The joy in the event for the most part silenced doubts as to the propriety of what had been done. The new bishop was there and was accepted. Just what the viceroy had feared had come about. For the time being the whole Serra was lost to the papacy.

#### 4 ATTEMPTS AT RECONCILIATION

The re-establishment of peace in the Serra was all-important, but no one had any clear idea as to what ought to be done; or, rather, too many people had too many ideas, all perfectly clear, as to what ought to be done to bring about this much-desired result. The situation was, indeed, one of quite abnormal complexity.

On the far right were the Portuguese civil and military authorities. These on the whole desired not to become involved in the local ecclesiastical squabbles. Yet at the same time they were officially charged with the duty of seeing to it that there was no derogation from the privileges of the king of Portugal under the *padroado* agreement.

The diocese of Cochin was left vacant by the Portuguese for more than fifty years. For part of the period under review the archdiocese of Goa was also without a bishop. But in each case the chapter was able to carry on all the work of the diocese, except for such acts as could be performed only by a consecrated bishop. They tended naturally to support the establishment, though at times their support was not more than half-hearted.

There were, however, other religious in Malabar, principally Franciscans and Dominicans; these were bitterly resentful over their exclusion from the Serra; this resentment, combined with an ingrained dislike of the Jesuits, almost drove them into the arms of the Thomas Christians and of Thomas, their new bishop.

In the centre were the two protagonists, Garcia and Thomas, each determined not to move one inch from the position which he had taken up or to admit any diminution of his rights.

Further to the left were the mass of the Thomas Christians. In the

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moment of crisis almost all had rallied to the archdeacon. Yet their support was less unconditional than he might have hoped. Among the Thomas Christians themselves there had existed from very early times the division between the Northists and the Southists.<sup>37</sup> The Southists as a whole were loyal to Garcia, and soon separated themselves from Thomas. Some among the *cattanārs*, including a number of the most intelligent among them, soon came to realise that Thomas had duped them, and that he whom they now called bishop was in no canonical sense of the term a bishop. Most serious was the defection of Parambil Chāndy, one of the four councillors, a cousin of Thomas and almost as influential as he. There was a rather large middle group, which had been shaken in its loyalty by doubts about the consecration, but the members of which not being strongly committed in either direction were likely to be influenced by considerations financial rather than ecclesiastical. A minority were so linked to Thomas by ties of kinship or by their intense dislike of the Jesuits that they were prepared to stick by him through thick and thin.

Out on the wings were the numerous petty princes, venal, likely to befriend the party which could put forward the larger bribes, capricious and liable to change sides at any moment, but on the whole likely to support their fellow-countryman against the intrusive foreigners, except when the foreigners could exercise strong financial pressure.

To produce peace and order out of such a witch's cauldron of pride, self-seeking, duplicity and interested motives could not be an easy task. No one comes very well out of the story. The one course which might have led to stable peace was the one which no one seems seriously to have thought of following. If the pope could have been induced to arrange for the regular consecration of Parambil Thomas as archbishop and metropolitan of the Serra, he might well have secured for himself and his successors the unconditional loyalty of the Thomas Christians for ever and a day. Garcia, of course, stood in the way; but Garcia was now seventy-nine years old, and could have been withdrawn to dignified retirement in Goa.

Everyone tried his hand in the game. Garcia put out various feelers to Thomas. Thomas made a variety of proposals. The pope sent out edifying documents to everyone concerned – to Garcia, to those who had remained faithful to him, to Thomas, to the followers of Thomas, to the world in general.<sup>38</sup> None of these efforts had any effect on the situation.

Then the pope decided to throw one more stone into the pool. Apparently following a suggestion made by some among the *cattanārs*, he sent to India four discalced Carmelites – two Italians, one Fleming and one German. These Fathers had two advantages – they were not Portuguese and they were not Jesuits.<sup>39</sup> The head of the mission was given the title of apostolic commissary, and was specially charged with the duty of restoring peace in the Serra.



### *Attempts at Reconciliation*

From the start difficulties arose. The Carmelites held the view that, as direct emissaries of the pope, they had been entrusted with a jurisdiction superior to that of the archbishop. Garcia naturally held the view that the newcomers had no business to interfere in his administration of his diocese. Fr Joseph OCD, the first Carmelite to arrive, forbade Garcia to carry out any ordinations till further notice. For the sake of peace Garcia consented though with a very ill grace. It was unlikely that any peace would reign between the two authorities.

Then Garcia, blind as ever in his obstinacy, took the one step which was certain to make things worse than they already were. He appointed as archdeacon one of the senior *cattanārs* of his party, Kunnel Mathai of Kaṭutturutti. The new archdeacon, like Thomas, was a nephew of Archdeacon George, and on family grounds would have been acceptable to the Thomas Christians.<sup>40</sup> But everyone except Garcia realised that such action on his part would jeopardise any faint hope of reconciliation which still remained. The Thomas Christians were not likely to admit that anyone, even an archbishop, could change the succession.

To lock the door even more firmly against any possibility of a settlement, on 26 April 1656 Garcia declared Thomas excommunicate and relieved of all his offices. Thomas, naturally, took no notice of this sentence.

In the meantime the three Carmelites who had arrived in the Serra had started on their ungrateful task of reconciliation. In this they had more success than might have been expected. Fr Joseph (Sebastiani) travelled widely, and made himself thoroughly acquainted with the affairs of the Serra. He published far and wide the word that Thomas was no true bishop. He managed to persuade the Thomas Christians, who were naturally suspicious of anyone who came from Rome, that it was not his aim to subject them again to the Jesuits. But there was one fatal flaw in the mission of the Carmelites – none of them was a bishop. They had neutralised the one authority in the Serra recognised by Rome, and they had no means of putting anyone in his place.

By this time Fr Hyacinth, the official head of the mission, had arrived in India. Fr Joseph rightly decided that the next step was to return to Rome, to lay everything before the Holy Father in person and at greater length than could be done by letter. So Joseph and Vincent set off for Rome, leaving behind Fr Matthew, later to be famous as contributor to the *Hortus Indicus Malabaricus*,<sup>41</sup> and Fr Hyacinth to bear the burden and heat of the day. After a journey which lasted more than a year, the travellers at length arrived in Rome on 22 February 1659.

When Sebastiani reached India again on 14 May 1661, he carried with him a concealed mitre. Malicious gossip declared that he had obtained the episcopal dignity by devious means.<sup>42</sup> There is no reason to suppose

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anything of the kind. Rome had for once decided to take the obvious and sensible course. Garcia was already very old and had put himself out of court by his intransigence. The archdeacon was unacceptable. There was in India no bishop who could or would consecrate anyone without a commission from the king of Portugal. To bring one of the *cattanārs* to Rome for consecration would have resulted in endless delays. The least objectionable course was to consecrate the man who was available, who was at the moment in Rome, and was also *au courant* with all the affairs of the Serra. So at the age of thirty-six Joseph Sebastiani, in religion Fr Joseph of Saint Mary OCD, was consecrated secretly on 15 December 1659, and given the title bishop of Hierapolis.<sup>43</sup>

By consecrating a bishop and sending him to the Serra without consultation with the king of Portugal, the pope was undoubtedly committing an act of aggression against the *padroado*. But a number of precedents had already been established. The commission given by the pope to Sebastiani is deserving of remark. He is appointed as apostolic commissary for the whole of the Serra ‘tam superstite quam defuncto praedicto Francisco Garcia Archiepiscopo’ (‘whether the aforesaid Archbishop Francis Garcia is alive or deceased’).<sup>44</sup> By a second brief he is authorised, if he finds it desirable, to divide the Serra into two jurisdictions, North Malabar or Kanara, and South Malabar, and with the assistance of two clerics to consecrate two priests, who may be either seculars or regulars, as titular bishops, and may entrust to them the administration of these regions.<sup>45</sup>

Before the new bishop could set foot in the area committed to him, two deaths, one long expected, the other less expected, had simplified the situation in the Serra.

On 3 September 1659 Francis Garcia, having taken a tender farewell of the clergy and people of the fortress of Cranganore, entered into rest. Of his virtues no one had ever entertained any doubt. An impressive record remains of his linguistic attainments.<sup>46</sup> But these merits were outweighed by the defects to which attention has already been drawn. Fr Thekedatu, who has tried hard to be fair to him as to other actors in this drama, comes to the melancholy conclusion that ‘in spite of his exceptional qualities of head and heart, and in spite of the success that he had earlier as a Jesuit superior, the fact remains that as archbishop of Cranganore he was a dismal failure’.<sup>47</sup>

On 10 February 1661 Fr Hyacinth of St Vincent, the head of the Carmelite delegation, died in Cochin. At the time of his arrival in India he was already more than sixty years old. His sincere but fumbling attempts at reconciliation led to no notable results. In the three years that he served in India, if he did not make things worse, he did not make them very much better.

### *Attempts at Reconciliation*

The death of these two leaders left Sebastiani in a strong position. He now openly claimed the episcopal dignity, which he had so far concealed through fear of the Portuguese,<sup>48</sup> and could show that he was the only legitimate bishop in the Serra. Cochin was still vacant, and the archdeacon had been firmly rejected by all the authorities in Rome. He was now free from the presence of Fr Hyacinth, who in his later days had been more of a liability than a help.

There was one new factor in the situation, of which Rome was perhaps more fully aware than those in Malabar – the irresistible advance of the Dutch. By 1663 no further doubt was possible. In that year Cochin fell to the Dutch invaders, and Portuguese dominion in Malabar was at an end.<sup>49</sup>

The attitude of the Dutch at that time towards the Roman Catholic church in India, and its chief representatives the Portuguese, was uncompromisingly hostile. Order was served on the Carmelites to leave Malabar within a stated period. They were told that they were to be conveyed to Persia, or some other place outside India, in friendly fashion. Sebastiani pleaded for permission to remain, but received the answer that not even the Dutch commander in India, Rikloff van Goens, had authority to disregard the instructions sent from Holland. All that he could do was to grant to the vicar apostolic some extension of time in which to set the affairs of the vicariate in order.

Sebastiani decided that the only course open to him was to make use of the faculty granted him by the pope, and to consecrate as his successor one of the Indian *cattanārs*. His choice, and that of the priests whom he was able to summon to meet him at Kaṭuturrutti, fell on Parambil Chāndy, the cousin of the archdeacon Thomas. Chāndy (Alexander de Campo) was stated to have been at this time fifty years old, a man of piety, prudence, seriousness, modesty and charity towards the poor.<sup>50</sup> The consecration took place on 1 February 1663,<sup>51</sup> less than a month after the capture of Cochin by the Dutch, in the presence of a vast crowd of people. But Chāndy was not consecrated as archbishop of Cranganore, but as bishop of Megara *i.p.i.*, and with the title of vicar apostolic. This may have been out of regard for the now rather shabby claim of the Portuguese under the *padroado* agreement, but it did also stress the complete subordination of the church of the Serra to the See of Rome. Sebastiani had, however, been able to recover from Cranganore the pontifical vestments left by Francis Garcia at his death, and so to array the new bishop in the traditional splendour of a bishop of the Western church. The final action of Sebastiani was solemnly to excommunicate the archdeacon and his principal adviser, the *cattanār* Itthommen.

Two weeks later Sebastiani left the Serra for good, having accomplished much, but necessarily having left undone many things that would have been

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for the benefit of the Thomas Christians. He spent some time in Goa, at the instance of the governor who desired to have the help of the only European bishop left in the whole vast area from the Cape of Good Hope to Cape Comorin, to bring some sort of order into the affairs of the hopelessly divided chapter of the archdiocese of Goa.<sup>52</sup> Having successfully accomplished this mission, the bishop went on his way to Rome, where he arrived on 6 May 1665.<sup>53</sup>

#### 5 THE DUTCH TAKE A HAND

The exclusion of the Carmelites from Malabar was neither as drastic nor as complete as might have been expected in view of what has been explained as Dutch policy. Fr Matthew of St Joseph was able to remain, having commended himself to the Dutch governors and especially to van Rheeде by his expert scientific and botanical knowledge.<sup>54</sup> Matthew seems to have come to India in 1657. He was skilled both in medicine and in the Arabic language. In 1674 he was able to build a church at a place the name of which is given as Bardelaquae Cettiati,<sup>55</sup> and by agreement between the bishop of Megara (Parambil Chāndy) and the Holy See to secure for it the status of a church exempt from the jurisdiction of the local bishop.<sup>56</sup>

Thus the two cousins, Tumi and Chāndy, were left scowling at one another across the distance that separated them. Each had acquired what the other most desired. Chāndy had received the regular episcopal consecration, which would be recognised as valid by the whole Western church; but he had failed to secure the title and the dignity which, from the time of the Synod of Diamper, had signified the independence of the Eastern church. Thomas had not secured the regular consecration to which he had ardently aspired; but he had undone the greater part of what had been done at Diamper, and could rightly claim that he was now the independent head of a church which boasted of its apostolic origins. Chāndy was in control of about two-thirds of the parishes and clergy of the Thomas Christians, Thomas had to be content with rather less than a third. Chāndy had to rely on the help of the Dutch, who were anxious to be able to count on the Thomas Christians as their allies. No one came to the help of Thomas. And yet contrary to all probability Thomas was able to hold his threatened church together; today he is honoured by the Malankara church as its second founder, second only to the apostle Thomas himself.<sup>57</sup>

Attempts to calculate the number of the Thomas Christians, and the parishes which adhered to the rival bishops, cannot be more than tentative since our authorities contradict one another at every point. Some have asserted the number of the Thomas Christians in the middle of the seventeenth century to have been 200,000, though some even go as high as

### *Stability in Spite of Strife*

300,000. Beyond all doubt these figures are inflated; 100,000 would probably be nearer the mark, though this may still be in excess of the reality.<sup>58</sup> Fr Matthew, in a letter to the Propaganda in Rome, dated 4 February 1669, states that of the parishes of the Thomas Christians 85 are faithful to Bishop Chāndy, whereas 26 hold with Parambil Thomas. But this figure is not as clear as it appears. The actual parishes of the Thomas Christians seem not to have numbered more than 90; the larger number results from the inclusion of small and isolated groups which never had parochial status. And Matthew's figure seems to assign too high a proportion to Chāndy as against Thomas.

When all factors have been taken into consideration the figure of two-thirds to Chāndy and one-third to Thomas may be regarded as acceptable. But it seems that the larger churches and those nearest to the main centres of civilisation adhered to Chāndy; strong support for Thomas lay in the remoter areas, and among those less influenced by contacts with the West.<sup>59</sup>

#### 6 STABILITY IN SPITE OF STRIFE

In this tangled history it was usually the unexpected which happened. In 1665 a certain bishop Gregory, sent by the Jacobite patriarch in Diarbekir, arrived in Malabar. Mystery still surrounds the circumstances of his sending and of his coming. These may have followed as a remote consequence of the letters written many years before by Parambil Thomas to the various patriarchs of the Eastern churches. At first the supporters of Thomas welcomed Gregory with enthusiasm, believing him to be a bishop of the same tradition as those who had come to rule over them in earlier years. Noting some difference in his manner of celebrating mass they began to be suspicious. But Thomas persuaded Gregory to adapt himself to the local rite, the same rite that had been adopted at Diamper, and was used by both the *Palayakūr* (the Old Believers), the name given to the Romo-Syrians, and by the *Puthenkūr* (the New Believers) or followers of Thomas. This Gregory agreed to do, except that he would not use unleavened bread in the celebration of the holy mysteries.

The followers of Thomas did not realise that the newly arrived bishop was about to introduce among them a theological revolution. To the Western mind the doctrine of Eutyches, to which Gregory was committed, was as different as could be from the doctrine of Nestorius, for whom the Thomas Christians had devoutly prayed until Diamper taught them better. The two agreed only in repudiating the doctrine of the Council of Chalcedon, which had been so sternly introduced among the Christians of the Serra by Menezes. But to these simple Christians matters may have presented themselves in a different light. Gregory was a foreigner who did

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not speak a word of Malayālam. He seems to have been tactful and not to have introduced extensive changes. His great merit in the eyes of the Thomas Christians was that he was an Eastern bishop, and had nothing to do with either the Jesuits or the Portuguese. His views seem gradually to have spread themselves among the people, and in the end to have been accepted without any feeling that a revolution had taken place.<sup>60</sup>

Doubt exists as to whether Gregory conferred episcopal consecration on Parambil Thomas. Local tradition affirms that he did,<sup>61</sup> and that until the end of his life he refrained from exercising any of the functions of a diocesan bishop – these he left to Thomas. But this must be regarded as doubtful; if any such consecration did take place, it must have been carried out in secret, as Thomas did not wish to take any action which could cast doubt on the validity of his earlier consecration. Gregory was regarded by the people as a saint. From the time of his death, which took place in 1672, a special feast has been celebrated in his memory on the anniversary of his death. To this day he is regarded by the Christians of the Malankara church as one of their founders, and as the restorer of the true faith.

What followed on the death of Thomas I is extremely confusing, and reliable sources for the period are hard to find. Even the date of his death is uncertain. Germann states with confidence that it took place in 1673, one year after the death of Gregory,<sup>62</sup> and this may well be correct.<sup>63</sup> Thomas was succeeded by a line of shadowy heads, each of whom took the name Thomas. It is reported of Thomas III that he was still a layman at the time of his accession. He was almost certainly consecrated by twelve *cattanārs* following the ritual observed in the ‘consecration’ of Parambil Thomas. With Thomas V, who succeeded in 1686 and apparently ruled the church until 1720, we emerge into a clearer light of history. He claimed to have been consecrated by a Jacobite bishop, but according to Paulinus was not able to establish that this was so.<sup>64</sup> The Dutch had been pleased to afford protection to the adherents of Bishop Chāndy; the party of Thomas, as we have seen, was left without the advantage of such protection. Yet that party managed to maintain its position, to hold the flock together, and to stand up for the rights and privileges of the Thomas Christians against the perpetual danger of encroachment by Hindu rulers.

If Thomas V did succeed in getting Jacobite consecration, this must have been at the hands of one of two bishops who arrived in India in 1685. In the month of January of that year one Bishop John came from Mosul with full credentials from the monophysite patriarch of Antioch. He was accompanied by another bishop, Basil, by one Greek priest, and by two Armenians. These two bishops showed themselves much less conciliatory than Mar Gregory, insisting more rigidly on Jacobite usage, destroying

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crucifixes and pictures to which the Thomas Christians had become accustomed in the long years of Roman domination. This resulted in such strong opposition both from Thomas V and from the party of Bishop Chāndy that the two prelates withdrew to the northern part of the area inhabited by the Thomas Christians. Basil died not long after his arrival and John a little later. No trace of their work seems to have remained; they deserve mention only as evidence of the continued interest taken by the patriarch of Babylon in the affairs of distant Malabar.

The party of Thomas was not alone in experiencing difficulty. Bishop Chāndy was also fated to run into a whole series of problems.

The selection of Chāndy had not met with universal approbation. None of the accounts of his work as bishop which have come down to us is unconditionally favourable, though attacks on his manner of living and character are few. He had few of the gifts of leadership, and his lack of learning was a serious handicap in the exercise of his high office. Nevertheless the role that he sustained during the years of his episcopate was of great importance to the church.<sup>65</sup> He was a bulwark and a bastion. If there had not been a legitimate and regularly consecrated bishop on the scene to contend with Thomas, there can be little doubt that Thomas would gradually have drawn the whole body of the Thomas Christians into his allegiance. It is an indication of the strength and weakness of Chāndy that the division between Old and New Believers has continued to the present day, and that the proportions have changed very little in three centuries.

Although he had been consecrated by a Carmelite bishop, Chāndy found himself in controversy and conflict with the Carmelites, who had managed to re-establish themselves in the Serra, and to set up a strong centre in Varāppolī not far from Cochin. The bone of contention was the appointment of a bishop coadjutor for the Serra. Following the ancient custom of his church, Chāndy wished to appoint his nephew Matthew. But the Carmelites objected, on the ground that Matthew lacked the necessary qualifications,<sup>66</sup> and arranged to appoint instead a man of their own choice, Rafael de Figueredo Salgado, who was of part Indian and part Portuguese descent, and resident in Cochin. Nothing could more clearly indicate the small regard paid by the Carmelites to Bishop Chāndy. He was the bishop, and the choice of his successor belonged by tradition to him and to him alone. The action of the Carmelites showed that they regarded themselves as the true source of all authority in the Serra.

Bishop Chāndy very properly refused to consecrate a bishop in the choice of whom he had had no hand. But the Carmelites had a resource of which Chāndy perhaps had not thought. Thomas de Castro, the Theatine and nephew of the first vicar apostolic, appointed vicar apostolic of Kanara in 1674, was at this time residing in Mangalore. When the Carmelites invited

him to consecrate a coadjutor bishop for the Serra, he was delighted to accept the invitation, apparently believing that this might give him some permanent hold on the affairs of the Serra.<sup>67</sup>

For a considerable time Chāndy would have nothing to do with the intruder; but in the end he seems to have recognised him as his coadjutor and to have surrendered to him some of his rights, an action that he was later deeply to regret. Rafael set out to make himself unquestioned master of the Serra, and to bring even the disalced Carmelites under his authority. It is not necessary to believe all that is reported of Rafael – that he permitted the *cattanārs* to indulge in concubinage, that he took into his service runaway monks and priests, that he sold for money the mass-wine supplied to him by Propaganda – but it is clear that he was a less than desirable character and no credit to the Carmelites who had chosen him. At last Chāndy could stand it no longer; the open dissension between the two bishops threatened to destroy the unity of the church of the Serra.

Something had to be done. In a brief of 6 February 1687 Pope Innocent XI appointed Custodius de Pinho, vicar apostolic of Bijāpur and titular bishop of Hierapolis, as apostolic visitor to the Serra, with full authority to inquire into disorders and to restore discipline.<sup>68</sup> At this point the records fall into hopeless confusion. Fr E. Hull cannot be sure whether Custodius died in 1689 or in 1697.<sup>69</sup> It is not certain whether he ever reached the Serra, and no report from him on a visitation of the area seems to have survived. What does seem to be clear is that Rafael, whose irregularities had by now become intolerable, was removed from office (the date is uncertain), and died on 12 October 1695.

By now all the principal actors had been removed from the scene. Bishop Chāndy had died probably not later than 1692, Custodius certainly not later than 1697. Rafael appears to have died in 1695. The redoubtable Fr Matthew of St Joseph had died in Cochin in 1691 and had been buried in Varāppolī. Once again the Serra was left without any bishop standing in any regular succession.

There was a rumour that a Jesuit bishop was to be appointed; but detestation of the Jesuits was still so hot among the Thomas Christians that such an appointment would have let loose a most dangerous storm. Wiser counsels prevailed, and the pope appointed a Carmelite, Fr Angelus Francis of St Teresa, as vicar apostolic of north and south Malabar, and titular bishop of Metellopolis. On 22 May 1701 Francis was consecrated in the parish church of Mangate by a Syrian bishop, Mar Simeon of Adana, who had been sent to India by the Syrian metropolitan of Diarbekir in communion with Rome.<sup>70</sup>

The Serra was not destined to enjoy even a brief time of peace. By the end of our period there were three Portuguese bishops in India. Augustine of the



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Annunciation had been archbishop of Goa since 1691; since 1699 a new bishop of Cochin, Peter Pacheco, had been resident in the southern part of his diocese where the Dutch writ did not run; John Ribeiro, a Jesuit, was made archbishop of Cranganore in December 1701. None of these prelates was permitted by the Dutch to reside anywhere in the Serra. But, hardly had the bishop of Metellopolis taken over the rule in his troubled vicariate, when the three joined together in a bitter protest against his appointment as an infringement of the rights of the king of Portugal under the *padroado* agreement. Against the orders of the Dutch Ribeiro managed to enter the territory of Cranganore, and stirred up renewed controversies among the Thomas Christians as to the jurisdiction to which they belonged. On 20 June 1704 a number of *cattanārs* came together in the church at Kaṭutturutti and swore by the Saviour, by the holy Virgin and the twelve apostles, to remain independent of Goa, until the pope could hear their appeal, and place them, as before, under the rule of the Carmelite vicars apostolic, 'since from that order they had received the truest help in all their necessities'.<sup>71</sup> These unhappy disputes made it certain that the schismatics would not return to the unity of the church, and greatly hindered the work of evangelisation among the non-Christians.

### 7 THE BALANCE OF A CENTURY

It has been necessary briefly to chronicle these unhappy contentions, since, without some information of this kind, it would not be possible to form a picture of the life of the Thomas Christians in this troubled period. The astonishing thing is that, in spite of the troubles, the church continued to exist, retained its hold on the greater part of its church buildings and other property, maintained a strong sense of unity, in spite of the divisions, and of distinctness from the surrounding Hindu society, and was able to move forward into the eighteenth century, undiminished in numbers and with a courage that enabled it to endure the troubles which still lay before it. There is, humanly speaking, only one explanation for this remarkable persistence. In history the doings of prelates and of the great ones of the earth tend to be recorded at inordinate length. But this is not where the life of the church really lies. Through all these years the *cattanārs*, many of them ignorant and ill-trained men, not always virtuous and not always prudent in their actions, continued to celebrate the *Qurbāna*, the Eucharist, Sunday by Sunday, and to maintain the continuity of worship which had held the church together through many dark centuries. The people continued to come to church, to make their humble offerings, and to experience the fellowship of worship. Knowing little of the Gospel, for the most part illiterate, they still knew that they were Christians and that a great inheritance had been entrusted to their

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keeping. Above all, they were kept in being by awareness of that great world church of which they were a part though they had little contact with it, and by the hope of better days to come. The better days were very slow in coming. But when at last they came, the ancient church was still there, ready in spite of the unhealed divisions, to renew its youth, and to take advantage of the new opportunities that in due time were to be offered to it.

## 14 · Other Roman Catholic Missions

The historian who essays to deal with the story of the Roman Catholic Church in India in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries is faced at the outset by a grave difficulty. It seems that there is not in existence any orderly and systematic account of this history such as could give general guidance in the planning of a survey of this period. In 1958 an Indian scholar, well versed in the history of the church in his country, wrote:

The missions in India, taken as a whole, have not yet been made the object of a serious and well-documented study. Since the history of the Indian [Roman Catholic] Church is no more than a long series of dissensions and conflicts, there exists on this subject an abundant polemical literature . . . which has little scientific value. Apart from such works, the various orders and congregations have left to us some well-written monographs on their respective missions.<sup>1</sup>

The situation in 1982 is better, but not very much better, than it was in 1958. It still remains difficult, therefore, to work out a systematic and reasonably complete survey of the history and progress of the church in those difficult centuries.

The best interim method, for the historian, seems to be to take a number of the most notable events and processes, which on the whole are also the best documented, to deal with them in some detail, and to fill in the gaps as best he can, hoping that it will be the good fortune of some later writer to weave together the various pieces into an orderly and intelligible tapestry.

### I EARLY DAYS OF THE PROPAGANDA

On 6 January 1622 Pope Gregory XV called into existence the Sacred Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith. The aims and purpose of the Congregation were succinctly set forth in the opening pages of its *Acta*:

The Holy Father in Christ and Lord Gregory XV, by divine providence pope, perceiving that the principal work of the pastoral office is the propagation of the Christian faith, by which men are led to know and worship the true God and to live seriously, piously and justly in the world, erected a Congregation composed of thirteen cardinals and two prelates, and also a secretary, to whom he committed and recommended the affairs of the propagation of the faith.<sup>2</sup>

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There had been some precedents for action of this kind. But the Propaganda, as it came universally to be called, was the first serious attempt to view the whole missionary work of the Church of Rome as a unity, to bring it under a measure of control, and to establish a central point of reference. The Propaganda was brought into being to make it plain that the pope was the head of the missionary enterprise, as of all other ecclesiastical enterprises. This headship was to be made a reality by the accumulation at Rome of reliable information about all the missions, by establishing contact with the heads of all the religious orders, by strengthening the dioceses existing in the lands of mission and greatly increasing their number, and by issuing directives as needed to all those engaged in the work of evangelising the non-Christian world.

Propaganda was fortunate in its first secretary. Francis Ingoli (1578–1649), a native of Ravenna, who held office for twenty-seven years, was described by a contemporary as ‘the head, the body and the feet of the Congregation’.<sup>3</sup> Very varied opinions have been held about him. The judgements of contemporaries were almost wholly favourable. At the time of his death one wrote of him, ‘I do not think that in the Roman Curia one could easily find one to compare with him.’ A modern writer has expressed himself in very different terms. Ingoli is accused of being a dreamer, an autocrat hungry for power, a Roman centraliser, a narrow-minded, short-sighted prelate, an unpractical idealist.<sup>4</sup> For a definitive judgement on Ingoli it will be necessary to await the publication of all his many memoranda, reports and other documents. When the final judgement is handed in, there can be little doubt that it will be found with few qualifications to be favourable to him.

Ingoli never mastered the art of clear and elegant expression, either in Latin or in Italian. But his thinking was clear enough, and he was capable at times of giving forceful expression to what was in his mind. His programme for missionary work can be summed up under four main headings:

the missionary work of the church must be transformed from a colonial phenomenon into a purely spiritual and ecclesiastical movement.

missionaries must be set free from every kind of subjection to secular powers.

some kind of unity must be imposed on the labour of evangelisation.

above all, an indigenous clergy must be created, and hierarchies composed of nationals of the various countries must be brought into being.

To the last of these four Ingoli returns times without number. The ordination of indigenous priests and the consecration of indigenous bishops

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will be the best method for rescuing the missions from the paralysis into which many of them have fallen. He is at pains to show the baselessness of the objections made by many missionaries to such ordinations. If we do ordain nationals to the priesthood, we shall be doing no more than what the apostles did, and their practice is to be followed since it was dictated by the Holy Spirit.<sup>5</sup> The exclusion of the native races from the priesthood is the greatest hindrance to the spread of the Gospel, since the unreached provinces can more easily be converted by the citizens of these countries than by foreigners, who are not held in great esteem in those areas.<sup>6</sup>

### 2 THE FIRST VICARS APOSTOLIC

As early as 1625 the attention of Ingoli had been directed to the presence in Rome of a young Indian of exceptional promise, Matthew de Castro, by birth a Brāhman from Divar in the neighbourhood of Goa. Matthew appears to have been born about the year 1604,<sup>7</sup> in a family which, if not wealthy, possessed a reasonable amount of property. He had managed to secure a fair education in the Franciscan college of the Three Kings at Bardes, and had felt the call to ordination. He made his desire known to the archbishop of Goa, at that time Christopher de Sá, but was met with an abrupt refusal; when pressed, the archbishop averred that he had taken an oath not to ordain any Brāhmins and that he intended to keep his oath.<sup>8</sup>

Determined not to be frustrated in his plans, Matthew decided to make his way to the West and to find a bishop willing to ordain him. He set out from Goa. After an adventurous journey, which took no less than four years, and included a visit to Jerusalem where he lost all his papers and almost all his money, he at last arrived in Rome, probably in September 1625, and made himself known to the authorities of the Propaganda. The arrival of this intelligent young man could not but be welcome to Ingoli, whose greatest need was for first-hand information from the lands of mission; here it was ready to his hand.

According to Matthew's own account, he told the secretary that the reports which were reaching Rome were incomplete since they pass over what is bad and tell only what is good. In reality many people hold back from conversion because they know that in India to become a Christian means to become a slave. The authorities are unwilling to ordain any Brāhmins; none are admitted to the religious orders – they declare that this would be contrary to the will of his Catholic majesty. No Indian is admitted to higher studies, and this causes great hindrance to the propagation of the faith.<sup>9</sup>

Matthew in the course of his life made many enemies but he was also skilful in acquiring powerful protectors. Among the most powerful was Cardinal Barberini, brother of Pope Urban VIII.<sup>10</sup> After an examination, in

which he affirmed that he could speak fluently Latin, Spanish, Portuguese and Konkani (to which some accounts add Italian), and that on his travels he had picked up some Turkish, Persian and Armenian, he was admitted to studies in philosophy and theology. Although he was not yet a priest, he was able through the kindness of the Oratorians to join the company of those who lived together in community at the church of St John of the Florentines. This lasted for five years, during the whole of which Matthew comported himself well and won the approval of all who knew him. In 1631 he acquired the degrees of doctor in philosophy and in theology.

In the meantime Matthew had obtained the dispensations which made it possible for him to be ordained without letters dimissory from his ordinary, the archbishop of Goa, and also without presenting such documents as his baptismal certificate which had been lost, *ad titulum missionis*, for missionary service abroad.<sup>11</sup>

Having been ordained, Matthew now asked for permission to return to his own country, and this was readily granted. In order to give him added dignity and authority the pope appointed him protonotary apostolic, and the Propaganda secured for him a number of special privileges. In the document issued in March 1631, he is described as D. Matthew de Castro Melo, an Indian missionary to the non-Christians of the East Indies and especially to the people called Brāhmans.<sup>12</sup> After tedious delays he at last reached Goa towards the end of 1633, after an absence of twelve years.

Matthew seems to have lacked the modesty and prudence which would have been fitting in a young man recently ordained and without knowledge of missionary work. Instead, he 'has showed concessions of this kind to all sorts of people, only with a view to showing that he has returned crowned with glory and honour'. These words are taken from a long complaint drawn up by John da Rocha, administrator of the archdiocese of Goa in the absence of the archbishop, and transmitted to the cardinals of the Propaganda.<sup>13</sup> It is here suggested that the documents shewn by Matthew were forged – an objection well-chosen, since in all probability, even if the documents were found in Rome to be authentic, two years would pass before news of their authenticity could reach Goa. In the meantime the administrator could not see his way to allow Matthew to make use of any of his privileges within the boundaries of the archbishopric of Goa. 'We know by experience that the Brāhmans are not sufficiently firm in the faith to make proper use of such extensive faculties; the experience of us who know them inside and out bears witness to this fact.'

There were grounds for anxiety in the mind of the administrator. Too many Indian priests had been ordained. The archbishops had taken advantage of the rule that candidates might be ordained 'on their patrimony' without title to place or parish, thus turning what the council of

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Trent had intended to be an exceptional permission to meet cases of special need into a general permission.<sup>14</sup> In a report dating from the middle of the seventeenth century it is stated that in the Goa islands there were eighty-five parishes; of these fifty-three were served by members of the religious orders, eleven by Portuguese secular priests, and only twenty-one were in the hands of Indian priests. At the same time there were in the islands 180 Brāhmins who had been ordained but for whom no benefice had been found. These young men were idling away their time at home with nothing to do. It is not surprising that their character and conduct shed little lustre on their priesthood, and that from being unemployed they were becoming unemployable.<sup>15</sup>

This was the situation which obtained when Matthew de Castro returned from Europe. In view of the rough reception accorded to him and the endless difficulties which encountered him on every hand it is not surprising that he decided to return to Rome and to state his case to Propaganda in person. On this occasion he took to himself the title 'procurator of the Brāhmin people'.

For the second time the coming of Matthew appeared to Ingoli as a gift from heaven. It had become clear to him that not much progress could be made in the Indian mission, unless Propaganda had on the spot a representative invested with considerable powers and authority. Who more suited to carry the weight of authority than Matthew, educated in the best theological schools of Rome, all too well acquainted with the Portuguese in India, and familiar also with the customs of his own people?

The main obstacle in the way of the development of the plans of Ingoli was the Portuguese *padroado*. The ingenious device adopted by him in order to circumvent this obstacle was the extension of the office of vicar apostolic. The custom of creating bishops *in partibus infidelium* to carry out episcopal functions but without territorial jurisdiction was by now well established. The pope had appointed vicars apostolic to care for sees in countries such as Hungary and the Netherlands where owing to the inroads made by Protestants it was not possible for territorial bishops to be appointed and to reside. Would it not be a legitimate extension of this method to appoint vicars apostolic to areas in which no diocese existed and in which it was unlikely that new dioceses would be created by either Spain or Portugal?<sup>16</sup>

The presence of Matthew de Castro in Rome seemed to indicate one person suited to grace the new office. The second choice fell on Fr de Santo Felice, who was to become vicar apostolic in Japan, with the title 'bishop of Myra' *i.p.i.* As Matthew knew the route so well, it was arranged that he should accompany Santo Felice to Japan, and should then make his way back to India, and take up, as bishop of Chrysopolis *i.p.i.*, the post of vicar apostolic to Idalcan for which he had been consecrated.<sup>17</sup>

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So, in dead secrecy, on 30 November 1637 the two new bishops were consecrated by three little known bishops in the chapel of the Carthusians of St Mary, and sent upon their way.<sup>18</sup>

The bishop of Chrysopolis, as he now was, was to go to an area in which, though a number of Christians resided, there was nothing like an organised church. Nevertheless it was certain that Portugal would regard this as the gravest infringement of the *padroado* which had yet taken place. And Matthew was not the man to make peace. He went back to India with a deeply ingrained hatred of the Portuguese, and in particular of the Jesuits, to whom he attributed not only his own misfortunes but also almost all the troubles which had befallen the church in India. He made no attempt to conceal his views.

Matthew's first concern was for his vicariate of Idalcan. A bishop can do nothing without priests. He had managed to gather round him in Goa a small number of like-minded Christian Brahmins, and these he requested the archbishop to ordain. He was met with a point-blank refusal, on the ground that the ministrations in India of a bishop who had not been appointed by the king of Portugal were inadmissible. Undeterred, or provoked, by this rebuff, Matthew crossed over into the region of Bījāpur, and proceeded to ordain his young friends without letters dimissory from their ordinary, the archbishop of Goa. This was undoubtedly a breach of canon law; Matthew could defend himself on the ground that he simply had to have priests, and that moreover he was planning to organise the newly ordained as a congregation of the Oratory (of St Philip Neri), and that this would withdraw them from the jurisdiction of the archbishop.

The reaction of the Portuguese against Matthew was extremely strong. The tale of the ordinations, reinforced by the allegation that the conduct of these young priests was very far from being above reproach, was not the only charge against the vicar apostolic; it was alleged that he had been engaged in political negotiations with the Dutch to the detriment of the Portuguese, and this may not have been mere invention. Matters became so serious that nothing would serve but for Matthew to take for the third time the long and perilous journey to Rome, and to defend himself in person. He left Goa on 3 April 1643.

The vicar apostolic was a man of infinite plausibility. In Rome he was not merely cleared of all the main charges against him, but was allowed to return to India with enhanced powers – the kingdoms of Golconda and Pegu had been added to his sphere of work. After a frustrating period as nominally vicar apostolic of Ethiopia, a country he never succeeded in reaching, by 1651 he was back in India, and all the old troubles started up again.

Soon after his return he made his way to Agra, where he was actually received by the emperor Shāh Jahān in circumstances which are not altogether clear.<sup>19</sup> During this visit he managed as usual to set everyone by



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the ears. There were the usual tales of political involvement, and of plots to the detriment of the Portuguese and the Jesuits. Not everything written against him by his enemies is to be believed; but it seems that his actions were both disturbing and discourteous. In their letters the Jesuits refer to him politely as *aper exterminator*, the 'wild boar out of the wood' of Psalm 80 (79): 14, and when they were finally rid of him, their relief expressed itself in the words of Scripture – 'he rebuked the winds and the sea and there was a great calm' (Matthew 8: 26).<sup>20</sup>

It was at this point that the vicar apostolic took pen in hand, and poured out the vials of his wrath in a series of open letters, the most notable of which are the *Mirror of Brahmins* and the *Letter to the City of Goa*. A single quotation from the letter will give the gist of his complaints:

My intention is clear. I want first that the natives should be treated as vassals [protected persons] and not as slaves; second that the privileges which your king has granted to the Indians should be observed; third, that the Franciscans should be removed from Bardes and the Paulists [Jesuits] from Salsette, and that their churches should be given to indigenous priests. These are in no way inferior to the Franciscans and the Paulists; on the contrary as regards life, morals, and firmness in the faith they are their superiors.<sup>21</sup>

Such provocative action could not but provoke reaction. But surely Fr Metzler, who has published these documents, is right:

If the authorities in India had met with greater understanding the justifiable claims of Castro and Ingoli for more generous training for the indigenous Brāhman priests, and for the establishment of a sound relationship between the number of foreign and indigenous priests on the one hand and the number of foreign and indigenous Christians on the other, this tragic chapter in the history of missions need never have been written, and the tension between the Propaganda and the Portuguese *padroado* might have been less harmful to the work of the missions.<sup>22</sup>

As usual Matthew was able to find friends to defend him. The Carmelite Joseph Sebastiani on his way to Malabar made a visit of inspection to the realm of Adil Khān, and reported to Propaganda, 'Don Matthew is a man of great merit; everything reported of him is sheer calumny except for his too great readiness in conferring ordination.'<sup>23</sup> But this was not the general opinion. The troubles that Matthew had brought upon himself were by now too heavy to be borne, and so once more he found it wise to return to Rome. This was to be his last journey. The cardinals, having got their troublesome bishop in their hands, decided to keep him where he could do no more harm either to himself or to the cause. He remained in quiet retirement in Rome till the day of his death in 1677. The Propaganda continued to speak well of him, and it is reported that the secretaries on occasion made use of his services in giving advice on Indian affairs.<sup>24</sup>

There is a strange mixture of comedy and tragedy in this story.<sup>25</sup> The

eccentricities of the first Indian bishop caused great anxiety to Ingoli and his followers. But it was made clear that there was to be no withdrawal from the policy; the regime of the vicars apostolic had come to stay, and if suitable Asians could be found they would be appointed.

Matthew de Castro lived long enough to see the appointment of two further Indian priests as vicars apostolic.<sup>26</sup>

Custodius de Pinho, like Matthew de Castro, was of Brāhman origin. As a young man he had been brought to Rome and had completed his studies in the college of the Propaganda. In 1668 he was chosen as vicar apostolic of Idalcan, to which Pegu and Golconda were added not long after. He was consecrated in Rome on 14 January 1669, with the title of bishop of Hierapolis *i.p.i.* Like Matthew he had difficulties with the Portuguese; but a suave and conciliatory manner seems to have saved him from the violent hostility which had so much hindered the work of his predecessor. He is credited with bringing bright new life into the vicariate of Idalcan, having ordained many candidates, built churches, and brought a seminary into being.<sup>27</sup> Custodius chose Bicholim, not far from Goa, and the place in which Matthew had established his house of the oratory, as his residence. In 1696 he asked to be relieved of all his duties on the ground of ill-health, and died at Salsette on 14 April 1697. He lacked the almost frenzied zeal of de Castro; but he demonstrated far better than his predecessor what an Indian vicar apostolic ought to be.<sup>28</sup>

Since the number of Christians in Kanara, south of Goa, was increasing, Propaganda decided to extend to this area also the regime of the vicars apostolic. Thomas de Castro, a nephew of Matthew, had accompanied his uncle to Rome, and after completing his studies had joined the Theatine order. He had been designated as prefect and Visitor of the central institution of the Theatines in Goa, when it was decided that he should be the first vicar apostolic of Kanara.<sup>29</sup> The bull of his appointment makes it clear that he is to be regarded as 'inquisitor-general and founder of the mission in the realm of Cochin, Tanor, Gingi, Madura, Mysore, Cranganore, Cannanore, and the whole coast of Kanara'. It is true that none of the regions mentioned was directly under the rule of Portugal, or subject to the terms of the *padroado*. It is true also that the See of Goa had been left vacant by the crown of Portugal for many years (1635-75), and that no kind of episcopal supervision was available for Kanara. But it is clear also that, from the point of view of Portugal and of Goa, Propaganda had been guilty of aggression of an open and highly objectionable kind.

Thomas was consecrated in Rome in 1674 with the title of bishop of Fulsivelli *i.p.i.* He arrived in India in 1675,<sup>30</sup> and after two years in Calicut settled in Mangalore. By this time, there was a new archbishop of Goa, Antony Brandão, a Cistercian. Immediately on his accession to the

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archiepiscopal throne, the archbishop took the gravest exception to the presence, in an area for which he held himself to be responsible, of an intruder, whose ecclesiastical character he was wholly unwilling to recognise. In 1681 he sent to Kanara a gifted Goan priest, Joseph Vaz, destined later to attain to great eminence by reason of his work in Ceylon, to restore order and to strengthen the hands of the Goan party.

Thomas died in 1684,<sup>31</sup> and was not replaced. Thereafter the authority of Goa was to some extent restored in the disputed territory.

With the year 1696 the story of the Indian vicars apostolic comes to an end. For two hundred years after that date no Indian was to be consecrated to the episcopate. Of the three who had served, one had been intelligent but unsatisfactory; two had been less than notably effective. But this was no excuse for the failure to carry the experiment further. This failure suggests that there was more to the complaints of de Castro, exaggerated as may have been the form in which he expressed them, than has sometimes been admitted. Ingoli was wise in his generation; it is to be regretted that others in later days did not share his wisdom.<sup>32</sup>

### 3 TO FAR CATHAY

A survey of Roman Catholic missions in India in the seventeenth century can hardly exclude the great journey of the lay brother Benedict Goes from India to China, though by far the greater part of the journey lay outside the frontiers of India.

Reports had reached Jerome Xavier in Lahore of a great region called Cathay, in which the majority of the inhabitants were Christians, though there were also many Muslims and pagans.<sup>33</sup>

Where was Cathay, and who were these Christians of whom no word had previously reached Christian ears? It seemed to Xavier that the realm of Prester John had at last been discovered, and that it was of urgent interest to Christendom that contact should be made or renewed with it. The man indicated for the preliminary reconnaissance was Brother Benedict.

Goes had been born in the Azores in or about the year 1562, and had entered the Society of Jesus at the age of twenty-six. Not highly distinguished intellectually but a man of great humility and sincerity, he had served well in the third mission to Mogor from its inception in 1595 onwards. Together with a good knowledge of Persian, he possessed adaptability and that endless patience which is required of those who would travel in Central Asia.

Money would be needed for so immense a journey. The authorities in Goa produced 500 seraphins;<sup>34</sup> Akbar who was interested in the journey doubled the amount; Xavier was able to add a further 700. Merchandise of

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various kinds was added to his equipment. In spite of many alarms and attacks by raiders and robbers, Goes seems to have been able to keep his gold intact, and the amount provided was sufficient to keep him in modest comfort till the end of his days. He was given as companion a helper named Isaac, who is described as an Armenian from Lahore; this young man, who proved a most acceptable companion, was with Goes till the end.

Goes, having changed his dress and appearance to that of a travelling merchant, said farewell to his friends in Agra on 29 October 1602, but his final departure from Lahore seems to have been delayed till 24 February 1603; even this was early for the exacting journey through the mountains. A slow journey from Lahore to Kabul took several months. There was a further delay in Kabul, while sufficient numbers were recruited to form a new caravan; but in spite of illness Goes pressed forward, and in November 1603<sup>35</sup> reached in safety the great city of Yarkand. Here again there were interminable delays. Caravans from Kabul did not go beyond this point, and Goes had to wait nearly a year while a caravan to cross Central Asia was being formed. Other troubles there were none; he was kindly received by the local ruler.

Once a fresh start had been made, the travellers had to wander endlessly through what was almost desert country, until at last the city of Chalis was reached.<sup>36</sup> Here Goes met merchants who claimed to have been in Peking, and told him that there were in that city Christian strangers who were in high favour with the emperor and other grandees of the court. There was no reason to doubt their reports; Matthew Ricci had reached Peking some years earlier (1601) and had succeeded at least to some extent in breaking through the wall of suspicion with which all foreigners had to contend.

The next stage on the way was the city of Camul, otherwise known as Hami, lying below the level of the sea, hot and humid, immensely fertile, but with a bad reputation among travellers by reason of its disregard of the moral principles observed elsewhere.<sup>37</sup> And here Goes learned that he was at the end of his quest; he was approaching the borders of China. No such place as Cathay had ever existed except in the imagination of some merchants; all that they had told the Great Mogul and Xavier was derived from ignorance or fiction, or from sheer lying. China and Cathay were one.

Goes was already three years out from Agra when he reached the Great Wall of China. A single day's journey from the Wall brought him to Suchou, the first city of China, a distance of only twenty-five miles. Here he had to endure a delay of more than a year before contact with the Jesuits in Peking was established. On 31 March 1607 he was joined by a young Chinese, Chong Ma-li, who bore the Christian name John Fernandes, spoke Portuguese, and was a candidate for admission to the Society of Jesus. Fernandes had been sent out by Ricci in the hope that he might make

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contact with the visitor from India. This had been accomplished. But when the Chinese Christian arrived, Goes was already a dying man and could travel no further.

Goes was not a priest. During the years that he had been on his travels, he had not been able once to hear mass, or to receive communion, unless he carried the reserved sacrament with him. In the hour of death there was no one to give him the *viaticum*. But his last days were not lonely. He had with him one who was attached to the same society, and with whom he could converse, and the devoted Isaac was always there. On 11 April 1607 he reached journey's end, and was buried in Su-chou.

After the death of Goes, Muslim companions of his journey to whom he had lent money succeeded in destroying his records in order to avoid paying their debts. Fernandes was able to recover a number of fragments, and with the help of Isaac to reconstruct the events of this memorable journey. Isaac managed in the end to make his way back to India via China; it is good to know that he was well received by the Fathers and given an adequate reward for all the services that he had rendered to Goes and to the society.<sup>38</sup>

#### 4 THE MISSION TO THE GREAT MOGUL

When Akbar died, though the Jesuits had been denied access to him on his death-bed, it might well have seemed that the star of the mission was in the ascendant. Prince Salim had succeeded to the throne without any of the turmoil that so often followed upon the demise of an Eastern ruler. The Fathers could reasonably hope for the continuance, at the hands of the son, of the favours that they had received from the father. Throughout the years of the third mission the heir had spent much time in the company of the Fathers, had given some evidence of Christian devotion, and had kindled even in the generally pessimistic mind of Xavier the hope that one day God would work a miracle in him.<sup>39</sup>

From the start all these hopes were to prove deceivers. It seems that the new emperor had given the Muslims a promise that he would restore the law of Muhammad to its old honour. He gave orders that the mosques should be cleaned and that the Muslim fasts and prayers should be restored.<sup>40</sup> He took as his imperial titles *Nūr-ud-din* (light of the faith) Muhammad, and *Jahāngīr* (conqueror of the world), thus indicating rather clearly the direction in which his allegiance lay.

From the beginning of his reign onwards he took actions which were certain to please the Muslims and to distress the Christians. One action of exceptional cruelty is recorded in detail in the sources. He caused the two young sons of an Armenian Christian to be brought before him and ordered them to become Muslims. On their refusing to do so, he had them forcibly

circumcised in his presence; when they refused to repeat the Muslim profession of faith, he had them cruelly flogged, until at last their resolution gave way and they did as they were told. When the Fathers were able to see them again, the younger of the two cried out, 'Padriji, I am a Christian, I am a Christian', and affirmed that the false profession of the Muslim faith had been extracted from them only by the pain that they had suffered. The end of the story is paradoxical, indeed incongruous; with a sudden change of mind, Jahāngīr resumed his formerly friendly attitude towards the Armenian and his children and other Christians, as though nothing unusual had taken place, and even despatched some business on behalf of the Fathers with every sign of goodwill.<sup>41</sup>

Three years later Jahāngīr took the astounding step of entrusting to the Fathers three of his nephews, young sons of his own brother, to be instructed with a view to their baptism. This event not unnaturally caused great astonishment and much speculation as to the motives that lay behind the emperor's action. Some suppose that the emperor was planning to introduce into his family beautiful Portuguese women, and thought that this might be more easily effected if some members of his family who could be regarded as possible bridegrooms were already Christians. Others thought that he might have the subtler design of excluding the boys, as Christians, from any possibility of succession to the throne. Whatever his reasons, Jahāngīr persisted in carrying out his plan; the boys were entrusted to Fr Corsi for instruction in the Christian faith. The names of the three princes, sons of the emperor's brother Dāniyāl, who had died in 1604, are given as Tahmūras, Bāyasanghar and Hoshang. The eldest of the three was at the time not more than ten years old. The baptism was carried out with the most impressive ceremonial, and even the English resident William Hawkins was prepared to put aside his Protestant prejudices to the extent of heading the procession with the standard of St George carried before him. The eldest boy received the name Philip, the second Charles, the youngest Henry.<sup>42</sup>

The expectation of the Fathers that these baptisms, to which a fourth had not long after been added, would lead to a flood of conversions was never fulfilled. But for the moment all seemed to be going well. A month after the baptism Xavier was able to write that 'the day before yesterday the princes came to hear mass, accompanied by a large number of people. Don Philip, whose birthday it was, came with his brothers and his cousins, and all attended holy mass, making the responses to the priest as their tutor had instructed them. They returned home in a state of great contentment.'<sup>43</sup> But gradually zeal waned, and other preoccupations took possession of the minds of the brothers. On 26 February 1615 Fr Corsi reports that he has finally given up his classes with the princes – their apostasy is due to pressure from the king: 'may God forgive him and help them to understand

the great peril to which they have exposed themselves'.<sup>44</sup> The later history of the young men was in sad contrast to the happiness of the beginning. In 1625, after the death of Jahāngīr, Hoshang and Tahmūras were put to death by Āsaf Khān on the orders of Shāh Jahān, and Bāyasanghar, after having been defeated in battle near Lahore, simply disappears from history and nothing is known of his fate.<sup>45</sup>

For years Jahāngīr kept the Fathers in a condition of mingled hope and despair, by ceaseless changes of attitude and by promises which came to nothing. In a letter of 9 September 1610 Fr Pinheiro records an almost comic scene which took place shortly after his return from an embassy to Goa. Among the presents he had brought for the emperor was a number of hats in the Portuguese style, a curiosity in that land where the best-known form of headgear was the turban. Emboldened by the interest shown by the emperor, Pinheiro ventured to say, 'How much better that hat would look on the head of his majesty, and how much more beautiful it would appear to our eyes.' Jahāngīr was particularly pleased with one of these hats, and, having embellished it with a plume of feathers and a spray of precious stones, one evening in the presence of a number of the magnates placed it on his head. Some of those present saw in this a symbolic action, and supposed that Jahāngīr had at the same time placed on his head the whole law of the Christians.<sup>46</sup>

In spite of actions such as this, there is no reason to suppose that Jahāngīr ever seriously contemplated becoming a Christian. Apart from the intellectual difficulties, which he was bound as a Muslim to feel, it was unlikely that a prince, long accustomed to the enjoyments of an extensive harem and able at any moment to add to the number of its inhabitants, would renounce all that in favour of monogamy. And, the stability of the empire being as precarious as it was, no emperor could take the risks involved in religious change.

If Xavier ever had any serious hope that Jahāngīr would abandon his inherited ways, he must before long have given it up. In a long letter to the Jesuit general dated 25 December 1613 he summed up his experiences of eighteen years. It was impossible for the Muslims to receive the Gospel. Either they could not make up their minds to renounce Islam; or, if they had forsaken it, they found it only too easy to return to it. It was impossible to convince them by reasoned argument, since they understood nothing of philosophy or metaphysics, and in all circumstances referred themselves back simply to the authority of their prophet. He could not point to a single case of conversion in all these years brought about by way of understanding or discussion; such cases as there had been had all involved some more material and human considerations.

Nevertheless Xavier does not recommend that the mission should be

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abandoned. The work demands, indeed, much prudence, much resolution and much patience. 'So', ends this rather gloomy letter, 'may the Lord give us the grace to carry out as we should the commands he has laid upon us.'<sup>47</sup>

Though it may not have been apparent at the time, the great days of the mission were already over. The two leading figures, Xavier and Pinheiro, disappeared from the scene almost simultaneously in 1615.

Xavier, now sixty-five years old, was prematurely worn out, and much against his will was withdrawn to Goa and given charge of the college of St Paul. His heart was at all times with the mission which he had served for nearly twenty years, and 'he still planned to return to a post where he might hope to die the death of a martyr'.<sup>48</sup> This was not to be. In 1617 Xavier was appointed archbishop coadjutor of Cranganore with the right of succession, this being the chief post in the Serra. This special mark of honour was to remain without effect, since Xavier had died before news of the appointment reached India.<sup>49</sup> His end was tragic. Early on the morning of 27 June 1617 fire broke out in the college of St Paul. Xavier was unable to escape the flames, and in the vivid words of a contemporary 'he who was wont to set their hearts on fire by his fiery words had been devoured by another, that is a natural, fire, without their being able to bring him the least alleviation'.<sup>50</sup>

Fr Pinheiro was also withdrawn to Goa, being then fifty-nine years old. He had spent twenty-three years in India. Of him, as of Xavier, it was reported that he was recalled 'because of the burdens and many troubles of old age, in order that, free from business and from labour, he might pass his time in prayer to God'.<sup>51</sup> He spent his days quietly in the professed house at Goa, and entered into rest four years later, in 1619.

Among those who followed none was of equal stature to these two. Special mention may be made of two among them. Francis Corsi was twenty-seven years old when he arrived in India in 1600; he spent in all thirty-five years in the service of the mission. He seems to have been of somewhat active and ardent disposition – on one occasion Pinheiro uses of him the words *pro solito suo ardore*. Much of his time was spent in attempting to counter the plans and purposes of the English; yet he and the ambassador Sir Thomas Roe managed to remain in a relationship of mutual respect and courtesy. Of this Edward Terry gives an agreeable picture:

His desire was that the wide differences 'twixt the church of Rome and us might not be made there to appear, that Christ might not be seen by these differences to be divided among men professing Christianity which might be a very main obstacle and hindrance unto the great design and endeavour for which he was sent thither, to convert people to Christianity there; telling my lord Ambassador further, that he should be ready to do for him all good offices of love and service there, and so he was.<sup>52</sup>



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Heinrich Roth, a German, was born in 1620, came to India in 1653, and settled in Agra in 1659. His chief claim to fame is that, after Nobili, he was one of the few who gave themselves to the study of Indian languages. He worked on Sanskrit for six years, and was without doubt the first European to compose a grammar in that language.<sup>53</sup> Roth not merely pioneered himself, but communicated to others what he had learned. The traveller Francis Bernier was acquainted with him and derived from him much of his information concerning 'the Superstitions, strange customs and Doctrines of the Indous or Gentiles of Hindustan'.<sup>54</sup>

Roth had occasion to visit Rome in 1664. There he met the learned Athanasius Kircher and passed on to him much information, which Kircher included in his book *China Illustrata*.<sup>55</sup> 'Between pages 162-163 . . . there are inserted five full-page copperplate engravings containing the alphabet and elements of Sanskrit, the originals of which were drawn by Roth himself. They were the first specimens of Sanskrit ever printed in Europe.'<sup>56</sup>

To the end of his reign Jahāngīr continued to show sporadic interest in the affairs of the Jesuits, and even to make promises of conversion, none of which of course was ever kept. What was lacking in him was any fundamental seriousness. C.H. Payne is not too harsh in his characterisation of him:

Unlike his father, Jahāngīr had no feeling for religion. Though he was interested in, and took some pains to understand, the doctrines of Christianity and other faiths, he was in no real sense a seeker after the truth. The study of religious problems was with him nothing more than a hobby . . . Jahāngīr would have subscribed to one set of doctrines as readily as to another; but he had very little use for any religion, and none at all for one that would not permit him as many wives as he wanted.<sup>57</sup>

Of the reign of Shāh Jahān there is little of interest to be recorded in connection with the Jesuit mission. The tragic story of the capture of Hūgli and all that followed from it has been described in another context. The Jesuits found themselves led increasingly to concentrate on pastoral work among Christians in the Mughul empire. Public discussions of religion had almost ceased, and such hopes as there had been of conversions in high places had dwindled away to practically nothing.

There was a momentary revival of hope towards the end of the reign through the interest in religion of the prince Dārā Shūkoh. This intelligent and attractive prince had a wide-ranging and deep interest in many forms of philosophy and religion. He was perhaps the most intellectual of all the members of the Mughul royal house. He it was who had arranged for the translation of a number of the *Upaniṣads* into Persian.<sup>58</sup> He entered into

relations of close friendship with Fr Busi,<sup>59</sup> who himself was a man of wide linguistic and scientific interests. If he had succeeded to the throne, the fortunes of the mission might have been very different from what they became. But the days of Dārā, as of so many princes of that house, were destined to end in tragedy.

Aurungzīb, a younger son of Shāh Jahān, was determined to make himself emperor. To that end he deposed his father, and in turn defeated and got rid of his three brothers. Dārā Shūkoh was defeated at the battle of Samogarh, ten miles east of Agra, and compelled to flee. From this time on, till the end came more than a year later, the story of the prince is one of flights and recoveries, but always with diminishing resources, until betrayal by a Baloch in whom he had unwisely trusted brought his increasingly feeble resistance to an end. These tragic days live vividly for us in the pages of the traveller and physician Bernier, who was attending on Dārā's sick wife, and was with him throughout his endless and almost aimless wanderings. After being shamefully treated in Delhi, Dārā was finally executed, on 9 September 1659, on a charge of apostasy from Islam.<sup>60</sup> There was in the character of Dārā a certain instability or amateurishness, an inability to make firm and sensible decisions, which raise doubts as to whether he would have made a good emperor.<sup>61</sup>

As in other similar cases, it is hard to assess the evidence as to Dārā's interest in the Christian faith. There is no reason to doubt that his interest was sincere, but so was his interest in a great many other things. It is alleged that in his last hour, he cried aloud, 'Muhammad kills me and the son of God gives me life.' Manucci clearly wishes us to believe that Dārā had a great desire to become a Christian.<sup>62</sup> On the other side, an Indian writer points out that there is no sign of Christian belief in his written works, and that the apostasy on the ground of which he was put to death consisted in his recognition not of the Bible but of the *Vedas* as the Word of God.<sup>63</sup>

From the rigorous and increasingly fanatical Aurungzīb the Jesuit Fathers could expect no help. There was no immediate change in relationships, but attempts at proselytisation were severely discountenanced. What hit the Christian cause more severely than anything else was the *jizya*, the poll-tax on non-Muslims, reintroduced by Aurungzīb in 1679, just a century after it had been remitted by Akbar.<sup>64</sup> Most of the Christians in Mogor were poor, and the tax was a heavy burden on them. Increasingly pressure was put upon those who could not pay to turn Muslim, and so to become exempt. During all this time the Jesuits were suffering from financial stringency. They could count on no help from the court. The decline in Portuguese power inevitably affected the revenues of Goa, and reduced the sums which could be spared for the support of the missions.

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The accounts of the Mogor mission for this period show a pitiful drop in the amount available for charitable purposes.

From the middle of the century onwards, the main concern of the mission was to care for congregations of Christians which had never been large and from now on had a tendency to dwindle. Such pastoral care was a necessary part of Christian activity, and it was carried on faithfully until nearly the end of the eighteenth century. But this must be regarded as a poor exchange for the high hopes of the early years, when the Jesuits looked forward to the gathering in of a Christian elite from the highest ranks in society, and kept dangling before their eyes the prospect of the conversion of the emperor himself. It had become clear that there would never be an Indian Constantine. Even if there had been, he could hardly have exercised such power in the religious sphere as had been within the reach of the Constantine of the Roman empire.<sup>65</sup>

### 5 A MISSION TO TIBET

One more gallant adventure of the Jesuits remains to be recorded, though it is only on the fringe of Christianity in India – the missions to Tibet.<sup>66</sup>

Four hundred years ago the minds of Christians were constantly being excited by tales of bodies of Christians in unknown and unexplored parts of the world. Fr Monserrate was convinced that there were Christians beyond the high ranges; he gave them the name Bottans. It is not clear how or why he came to use this term. He may have heard of the kingdom of Bhutan. But it is more likely that he had heard the term 'Buddhists', though without having any clear idea of what the term conveyed. When Christians of that era did encounter Buddhists, they were at first impressed by certain similarities to the Christian faith as they themselves understood it – monasteries, a celibate priesthood, the solemn chanting of liturgies, the ideal of poverty and so on.

On the basis of these and similar rumours, it was decided to send out a party to reconnoitre, and to find out how things really were. The pioneer was Fr Antony de Andrade, whose courage was well matched with the difficulties of the enterprise. The party set off from Agra on 30 March 1624. The jumping-off place for the penetration of the high interior was to be Srīnagar.<sup>67</sup> The local rājā was not friendly to the travellers, but this mattered the less, as they had no intention of staying there and were eager to press on beyond the high ranges.

The season was far advanced, and the journey proved to be terrible. A pass of 20,000 feet had to be crossed, and the travellers were in grave danger of death. But frost-bitten, suffering from mountain-sickness and snow-

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blindness, Andrade and his two companions reached Tsaparang, a considerable trading centre situated in the upper Jhelum valley at a height of about 14,500 feet. Without knowing it, Andrade had crossed the main chain of the Himalayas and was now on the northern side of the great mountain barrier.

At first the rājā was considerably disturbed by the sudden arrival of strangers from far away. But, when Andrade was able to meet him personally and to explain that his mission was purely religious and had no political significance, both he and the rānī became surprisingly friendly. When Andrade after a brief stay returned to India to report and to ask for fresh workers to help in the foundation of a mission, he carried with him a document in which the rājā stated that

rejoicing in the arrival in our lands of Padre Antonio Frangim (*parangi*) to teach us a holy law, (we) take him for our Chief *Lāma*, and give him full authority to teach the holy law to our people. We shall not allow that any one molest him in this, and we shall issue orders that he be given a site and all the help needed to build a house of prayer.<sup>68</sup>

True to his promise to return, Andrade was back in Tsaparang on 28 August 1625, accompanied by Fr Gonçales de Sousa, and with three other companions. The foundation for a church was laid on Easter Day, 12 April 1626; the work of building was completed in August of the same year, and the first place of Christian worship ever erected in Tibet had come into being.

By this time Andrade had become aware of the realities of the situation. There were no neglected Christians anywhere in the area. The resemblances between Buddhism and Christian ideas were of the slightest; the work of evangelism must start from the very beginning. But the friendship of the rājā remained unchanged; he did his utmost to help forward the work of the mission in spite of considerable opposition from the *lāmas*, the chief of whom was his own brother. There seems, however, no basis for the rumour that he was himself thinking of accepting baptism. Baptisms did, however, take place, though never in any large numbers. Andrade, still with visions of Cathay, and beyond Cathay of the route to China, in his mind, was optimistic about the future. His colleague Alamo dos Anjos, a Frenchman from Lorraine,<sup>69</sup> wrote in 1627 that, 'it will become one of the most flourishing missions which the society possesses at the present time'.<sup>70</sup>

These high hopes were not to be fulfilled. Two misfortunes fell upon the mission. In 1630 Andrade was recalled to Goa to become superior of the entire Jesuit mission; no other Jesuit who served in Tibet was his equal in power and determination. In 1633 war broke out between Ladakh and the kingdom of Tsaparang. The friendly ruler was overcome and carried off to

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captivity in Leh. The vengeance of the *lāmas* fell upon the Christians, who at that time were reckoned to number about 400. At that time there were five missionaries in the mission; no lives were lost, but the effective work of the mission was at an end.

Hearing this sad news, Fr Andrade bestirred himself to return to the scene of his labours; but in the midst of his preparations he died suddenly at Goa on 19 March 1634. A heroic journey by Fr Francis Azevedo in 1631 and 1632 had secured from the *rājā* of Ladakh permission for the continuance of the work. Sporadic efforts were made to keep the mission in existence, but never with any real success. In 1641 Fr Mapichi reported that the way to Tibet was permanently closed; he had himself escaped from the hands of his enemies, but one lay brother, Manuel Marques, the hero of many journeys, was still a prisoner. (It is uncertain whether he was ever released.) Fr Wessels concludes his masterly account of this romantic and tragic episode with the words;

Though on the spot the hostility of the *lāmas* swept away every vestige of Christianity and blotted out from the short memory of the rude inhabitants every remembrance of the preachers from the West, India did not forget. There . . . the hope remained alive that one day they might be able to go back to the forbidden land beyond the mountains.<sup>71</sup>

The mission of Tsaparang was not the only attempt made by the Jesuits to penetrate the fastnesses of Tibet. The Fathers had heard of the great kingdom of Utsang in eastern Tibet, and, rightly judging this to be the main centre of the *lāmas* and therefore crucial for the evangelisation of Tibet, proposed that an attempt be made to enter it. But this could better be done from the side of Bengal; and, as that part of India was included in the Jesuit province of Malabar, the organisation of the attempt should be left to the Fathers in Cochin.<sup>72</sup>

The proposal was accepted, and two Fathers, Stephen Cacella, a Portuguese aged about forty, and John Cabral, his junior by fourteen years, together with one lay brother, were sent to spy out the land. Starting from Hūgli on 2 August 1626, they made their way through Dacca and Hajo into the kingdom of Cooch Behar. Without doubt they were the first Europeans ever to travel by this route; but the news of the presence of foreigners in Tsaparang seems to have travelled far and wide by the *lāma* grape-vine, and the arrival of the missionaries occasioned less surprise than might have been expected. The next stage of the journey took them to Paro in the heart of Bhutan, where the *rājā* received them in most friendly fashion and urged them to stay permanently. But Bhutan is not Utsang. The Jesuits never lost sight of the ultimate object of the journey. As the local ruler was not willing to let them go, in the end Fr Cacella took French leave and made his way to

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Shigatse. Here he was joined by Cabral on 20 January 1628. They could not have chosen a better centre. Shigatse, at a height of about 12,000 feet on the Tsang-po river, is still one of the main centres of population in Tibet. Until the communist take-over the Tashi Lhunpo monastery was the residence of the Tashi Lāma or Ringpotchen, the second man in the kingdom. Tsaparang was about a month's journey distant. In Shigatse the king, a young man of twenty-two, like other rulers elsewhere showed exceptional favour to the foreigners, providing a residence for them, and a servant instructed to inform the king if there was anything that they needed.

Cabral's stay was short. He found it necessary to return to Hūglī on business connected with the mission. This time he took the other route, through Nepal, being the first European to make the acquaintance of that secluded country.<sup>73</sup> Having been delayed too long in Hūglī, Cabral on his return had to take the more difficult route through Cooch Behar where his colleagues Cacella and the new recruit Fr Manual Diaz joined him. The two latter pressed on to Utsang, leaving Cabral to follow later. But Diaz died on the way (3 November 1629), and Cacella soon after his arrival in Shigatse (6 March 1630). These two deaths sealed the fate of the mission. The authorities rightly judged that a mission in the far places of Tibet was too expensive, both in financial terms and in the demands made on human life and endurance, and that the rewards would be exiguous for so great an expenditure. It is possible both to admire and to regret the courage and the hardihood which led the messengers of Christ into these desolate regions; fantasies of Cathay and of hidden Christians were all the time mixed up with the solid additions to human knowledge which were the lasting fruits of these explorations.

Tibet became a closed land, and has remained so with some few exceptions to the present day. 'No more missionaries went to Utsang to take up Cacella's work and to pray over his lonely and forgotten grave beyond the mountains, whilst even the memory of his daring enterprise has grown dim and has almost sunk into oblivion.'<sup>74</sup>

### 6 DEVELOPMENTS ON THE FISHER COAST

The death of Henry Henriques marked the end of a period in the life of the church on the Fisher Coast. In the two generations which had passed since the arrival of Francis Xavier the Parava Christians had been exposed at every point of their existence to Christian teaching and to Christian influences. Few could remember the time before the coming of the Jesuits, and very few indeed the days before the first baptisms had taken place. They had never had deep roots in Hindu culture; all that they had they owed to the Christians. The church had now become a stable and settled reality. In the

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year 1601 seventeen Jesuit priests, together with two assistants and a scholastic, were serving twenty churches. Christian life was well ordered, and the Christians of the Coast were held in high esteem throughout the churches in India.

The seventeenth century, however, was not to be a time of peaceful development.

The Jesuits had had endless troubles with the Portuguese, who called themselves Christians but whose ungodly lives were among the principal hindrances to the spread of the Gospel. But this time the worst injuries came from the very one who ought to have been their best friend, the bishop of Cochin.

The arrangement for episcopal control in South India was highly unsatisfactory. The mission of Mathurai, which worked in territories not under Portuguese control, was under the governance of the archbishop of Cranganore, Francis Roz, who had no easy access to the eastern part of his diocese. The Fisher Coast, where Portuguese influence was strong, was part of the diocese of Cochin. The work of a Roman Catholic bishop, most of whose priests belong to a religious order of which he is not himself a member, has always been difficult, even when personal embitterment has not come in to complicate canonical issues.<sup>75</sup> The right course would have been to constitute a diocese for the Fisher Coast, of which the bishop would naturally have been a Jesuit. Portuguese ideas of episcopacy militated against this simple solution. The bishop, as they saw him, was a grandee, expected to live in considerable state and to manifest the splendour of the church rather than its simplicity. This kind of episcopacy was naturally expensive, and did not commend itself to administrators always perplexed by the task of making both ends meet.

The bishop of Cochin, Fr Andrew of St Mary (1588–1615), a Franciscan, is already known to us. Unpopular with his own brethren, he was at first very friendly towards the Jesuits; but gradually the milk of human kindness turned to gall and he had no good word to say for his former friends. Two causes are assigned for this change of front. The bishop extended to the whole order the controversies in which he was engaged with the archbishop of Cranganore, a Jesuit, over questions of jurisdiction. Secondly, with his high view of episcopal authority, he wished to establish control over all the parishes in his diocese, including the Fisher Coast. But this at once raised delicate questions of his rights as ordinary and of the rights of the Jesuits under the agreement of the *padroado*.

The details of these painful dissensions may be left to the specialist. In 1608 Fr Laerzio the Jesuit superior in Cochin signed a document in which he made over to the bishop all the Jesuit parishes in the diocese of Cochin. It is not necessary to take too literally the statement of a Jesuit historian, that

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‘the Fathers were wrenched away *manu militari et monachali*, and replaced by native priests who had emerged from the episcopal gaols of Cochin’.<sup>76</sup> It is, however, certain that the priests whom the bishop had at his disposal were inadequate in numbers and in character to replace those who had been driven out.

The actions of the bishop were condemned both in Rome and in Portugal. On 15 February 1614 the king signed an order to the effect that the churches of the Fisher Coast were to be handed back to the Jesuits, and in the following year brought about the resignation of the recalcitrant bishop. The chapter of Cochin elected as his successor the bishop of Mylapore, Fr Sebastian of St Peter, and it was hoped that reconciliation would quickly follow. But the new bishop hedged and dissembled. Nothing was done until 1621. Then at last the affair was settled by letters patent of the king of Portugal, and the Fathers were able to return to their field. Only those who knew Tamil were selected to undertake the work. In the end twelve were chosen, among them Fr Gonçalo Fernandez, the colleague of Nobili in Mathurai, now eighty-six years old, who thus gained his desire of being laid to rest by the side of Fr Henry Henriques, who had won him for the service of the Society of Jesus fifty-five years earlier.

The Parava Christians turned out in thousands to welcome the Fathers, weeping with joy at their return. But this return was not to be an affair only of joy. The poverty of the people was extreme. For years the pearl-fishery had ceased to operate. After more than twelve years of neglect, grave disorders had arisen among the Christians, a number of whom had returned at least in part to their old pre-Christian ways. It was not long before the Fathers found themselves locked in painful controversy with the flock they had come to feed.

The cause of the dispute is set out in a letter from Fr Antony Rubino in Punnaikāyal, dated 20 November 1623. During the absence of the Jesuits from the Coast many of the Parava Christians had remained faithful to them. Among these was a man named Henry da Cruz, who had worked hard for the return of the Fathers, and, when their return had been achieved, had contributed liberally from his own funds for the rebuilding of houses and churches. The rector, Fr Andrew Pereira, decided to reward him by securing his appointment as *Patangatin Môr*, a position of considerable eminence in the Parava community. He was warned against taking any action in the matter; Henry was not a member of any of the leading families, from among whom the principal officials of the community were generally drawn, and there were large sections of the church which would be gravely offended by the appointment. Pereira refused to listen, and with the help of the provincial and the visitor secured from the viceroy licence for the appointment of Henry to the vacant post.



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Once appointed, Henry showed himself insolent and arrogant. Before long matters came to such a pitch that, having convinced himself that one Peter da Cruz was his enemy, Henry went to Peter's house with a large company, burned down the house and killed no less than eleven persons, among whom Peter was one. Naturally, at this point Pereira turned against his former friend, denounced him, and proclaimed his dismissal. Henry strengthened his position by ingratiating himself with the vicar of the bishop of Cochin and the secular clergy. Vengeance was not long in seeking him out. As Henry was leaving church on 25 September 1623, he was stabbed to the heart, apparently at the instigation of a Portuguese, a former captain of the settlement of Negapatam, who was passing through Tuticorin at the time.

The partisans of Henry were furious; for a time it appeared as though plans for the expulsion of all the Jesuits from the Coast might be successful. But the visitor, Andrew Palmeiro, wisely took the matter in hand himself, and by his tact and wisdom was successful in restoring peace. The Jesuits had had many friends among the more peaceful members of the congregations. When Fr Rubino wrote again on 2 January 1625, he was able to report that the civil war was at an end. But on 2 May 1627, Fr Andrew Lopez commented regretfully, that 'for nearly four years the Fathers have had against them simultaneously pagans, Christians, kings, subjects, whites, Blacks, Portuguese, captains, clergy [the secular clergy introduced by the bishop of Cochin], and the bishop of Cochin himself, who provided credibility to the lies which had been circulated against us'.<sup>77</sup>

Such unpleasant episodes should not be omitted from a faithful record of the life of the church. But it must not be supposed that this was the ordinary state of affairs. After twenty years of renewed Jesuit effort the situation was very different. In 1644 Fr Lopez, in a general report on the Jesuit province of Malabar, informs us that

on the Fisher Coast hardly a trace of heathenism remains. The Christians are well grounded in the faith and in the knowledge of God. They have been very well trained. This is in part due to the care which the Fathers took many years ago to reduce the number of small villages, and to bring the Christians together in seven main centres.<sup>78</sup> . . . The piety of the women in attending mass is remarkable; every day the churches are as full as on the days of obligation.<sup>79</sup>

This report gives, with welcome precision, exact statistics of the number of Christians in, or attached to, each of the main centres of Christian life. The total number of Christians under the care of the Fathers is 26,218. Each day 2,836 children are instructed in the catechism, and of these a number are attending also the day schools in the villages.<sup>80</sup>

Throughout the seventeenth century the story of the Parava Christians, like that of other Christians in India, is punctuated by wars and rumours of wars, and by the arbitrary actions and exactions of the local rulers. To these a new peril was added in 1649 with the arrival of the Dutch. Their first raid on the Coast seems to have taken place on 7 February 1649, when a fleet of ten vessels appeared off Manappādu, and five days later occupied Patnam (Vīrapāṇḍianpatnam) without difficulty. On 13 February, they sailed away.<sup>81</sup> The Dutch had been for a considerable period installed further north, in Pulicat and Masulipatam. Their main centre of interest was Ceylon, apart from the Moluccas further east. It was inevitable that they should increasingly lay their hands on the Coromandel Coast. It was not their policy to conquer territories, but to control strong points from which trade could be established and controlled. This meant the steady elimination of the Portuguese. The commercial factor added weight to the religious rivalry which was already present. The attachment of Indian Christians to the Roman Catholic faith might mean also an attachment to the Portuguese; therefore to win the Christians over from their old allegiance to the Reformed faith might be not only a Christian duty but also a measure commanded by political strategy.<sup>82</sup>

The *predikant* Philip Baldaeus, though stationed in Ceylon, paid a visit to the Fisher Coast in 1658. He found the Christians very ignorant – they knew little beyond a few prayers. Although the Jesuits had been driven out by the Dutch, they had built little shelters for themselves some distance inland, where they could live in greater safety under Hindu princes than under their fellow-Christians of a different persuasion on the Coast. To them the people used faithfully to resort; and their devotion to their Roman Catholic faith was such that neither Baldaeus nor the former Roman Catholic John Ferreira d'Almeida, whom he left to carry on the work, was able to make much impression on their minds.<sup>83</sup>

Relations between the Dutch and the Jesuits were not always so strained as might appear from this first account. At the end of the century we are told that the earlier persecutions have come to an end, and that the more reasonable and gentle directors who are now in charge, so far from troubling the people in the matter of religion and doing violence to them, have given permission to their former pastors to return and live in the villages and to carry on the work which they had been doing since the days of Francis Xavier. One witness reports that he had found among the Dutch very honest people, who had gained the affection of the Christians and had made themselves loved by the missionaries, who in their turn had been able to render considerable services to the Dutch.<sup>84</sup>

Yet the tensions remained. In the same letter Fr Martin gives an amusing

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account, which has become famous, of the efforts of a Dutch preacher to win the Paravas away from the Roman Catholic faith. (The name of the apostle is not given; it is possible that Fr Martin is referring to the visit of Baldaeus forty years earlier.) When the *predikant* had had his say, the leader of the Paravas replied to him:

The faith which we profess took root in our hearts only through the power and the number of the miracles which our holy apostle [Francis Xavier] performed in all the places in which our community lives. For this reason, before you talk to us about changing our religion, you should if you please perform before our eyes not only as many miracles as our father did, but many more, since you wish to prove to us that the religion which you bring to us is better than that which he taught us. So begin by bringing back to life at least a dozen dead people, since Francis Xavier raised five or six on this Coast; cure all our sick people; make our sea richer in fish than it is at present; and, when you have done this, it will be time to consider what reply to make to you.<sup>85</sup>

The Paravas were, at the end of the century, very much what they had been at the beginning – hardy, rough, independent, quarrelsome, quick to flare up into anger and even into violence, but basically affectionate and good-hearted, and unshakable in their devotion to the Roman Catholic form of the faith. Their understanding of that faith may have been less than adequate; but they never showed any lasting tendency to revert to their previous Hindu ways (though there were a good many survivals from the Hindu past in their manner of living), and no efforts to win them to other forms of the Christian faith have ever had more than nugatory success.

### 7 OTHER MISSIONARY ENTERPRISES

Now that some account has been given of the four main missions of the Jesuits in India and beyond, it is time to turn to other enterprises of the Jesuits, and to the work of other religious orders.<sup>86</sup> But there is less to be recorded than might be expected. The second half of the seventeenth century was by no means favourable to Christian missionary work. The decline of the Muslim power, the endless wars in almost every part of the country, the weakening of the hold of Portugal, and the increasing aggressions by other European powers – all these things produced a climate of uncertainty and restlessness. Some new enterprises were started; but on the whole it was a time of holding on, of securing that which had been grasped, rather than of reaching out with courage to that which was unknown and unattempted.

Goa continued to be the centre of the Portuguese power and missionary effort in India. At the end of the century the Jesuits had four main buildings in or near the city. It had been found necessary to move the college of St Paul

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from its first site, which had proved very unhealthy, to another site nearer the centre of the city. The new college of St Roque took the place of the old which now served mainly as the place of instruction for catechumens. There were also the house of the professed, the novitiate, and the seminary of St Paul attached to the college of St Roque. The other foundations to the north of Goa were maintained throughout the century. In 1653 there were no less than 240 Jesuits in the Province, including thirty novices.<sup>87</sup>

There are reports of extensions in various directions. We hear of the foundation of a mission in Kanara, and of another in Mysore;<sup>88</sup> but for the time being little seems to have come of either of these. Not much more came of the efforts to set up work in the kingdom of Bījāpur. As early as 1608 the ruler had been approached with a view to securing permission to start a mission. He had agreed on condition that a mosque was erected in Goa. This was refused, and the negotiations came for the time being to an end. In 1622 some Jesuits did enter the kingdom to care for the Christians who were resident there, many of them being immigrants from Goa and from other Portuguese possessions. Again in 1653 there is a reference to Jesuits in the kingdom of Bījāpur. But it seems likely that all these attempts were swept away in the flood of the war of Aurungzīb against Bījāpur.

The day of the great French missions in India had not yet dawned. But an interesting beginning had been made in Pondichéri, which had become a French possession in 1673. In 1687 a considerable party of French Jesuits had been sent to Siam at the request of the ruler of that country. Not long after, a revolution broke out, and made impossible the further residence of missionaries in Siam. They withdrew to Pondichéri. When it became clear that there was no possibility of their return to Siam, they decided to settle permanently in India. In 1699 the bishop of Mylapore made over to them the care of the Indian congregations in the place, the French-language work being otherwise cared for. By 1703 there were already five priests and two lay brothers in the colony, and the French Jesuits were already lifting their eyes to other spheres. The story of their notable mission in the Carnatic belongs to a later stage in the history.<sup>89</sup>

Next after the Jesuits come the Augustinians.

Archbishop Menezes had founded in Goa the sisterhood of St Monica, for many years the first and only convent for women in India, and later added to this an orphanage for girls and the Magdalene, a home for errant women. Both of these were for a number of years under the direction of the Augustinians, until the increasing demand for workers in the mission of Bengal made it desirable to hand over these works to the direction of the secular clergy.

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The Augustinians had churches in Golconda and in other parts of India. But the chief centre of their activities was Bengal. Jesuits and Dominicans had made unsuccessful attempts to settle there. The Augustinians, who came in in 1599, seem from the start to have been more successful. The centre of their operation was the Portuguese settlement of Hūglī. When this was captured and destroyed by order of the emperor Shāh Jahān, the Augustinians could not but be involved in the disaster.<sup>90</sup> But the bad times passed away. Hūglī was rebuilt, and the Augustinians were able greatly to extend their work. The vicar general resided in Hūglī, and had the oversight of eleven parishes, each of which had a parish priest and a vicar. Some of these parishes were on the coast of Orissa, others in Bengal, and some even stretched out their hands to the eastward in Arakan, now part of Burma. It is stated that the Fathers had the care of 22,000 Christians, but that many of these were Portuguese and slaves.<sup>91</sup>

The mission did not, however, enjoy a very good reputation. It is affirmed that there were grave disorders not only among the laity who engulfed themselves in vices of every description, but even among the clergy. These, it is said, lead a highly disorderly life, employing a large number of domestic servants; they are generally very ignorant of the languages and of the sciences, and very avaricious; and this is the cause of many unpleasant things. The source for this severe judgement is the report submitted to the pope in 1678 by Fr Urbano Cerri, secretary of Propaganda from 1675 to 1679.<sup>92</sup> Cerri, at the centre of affairs in Rome was in a good position to receive reports from all over the world. But it is to be remembered that, besides being a passionate advocate of the development of the indigenous clergy, Cerri, like other heads of Propaganda, greatly preferred the secular clergy to the members of religious orders as missionaries, and may have been inclined to lend too ready an ear to reports circulated against the religious.

The Franciscans have often complained that the zeal of the Jesuits and their skill in propaganda have so dazzled the eyes of men that the share of others in the evangelisation of India has rarely been recognised and praised as is its due. The contemptuous words of G.P. Maffei have often been quoted:

The members of the family of Francis, when they first made a settlement in India, were eager for the extension of the religion of Christ in India; but being hindered by daily recitation of the Psalms, by conducting funerals, and by carrying out other ceremonials both by day and night, had not sufficient leisure for journeyings and for giving instruction in the catechism, and for other tasks which are doubtless necessary for the conversion of the heathen and for the care and upbuilding of them in the faith.<sup>93</sup>

The recovery and publication of the *Conquista Espiritual do Oriente* of Paul da Trindade may be regarded as a sufficient answer to this

unfavourable judgement. Paul was born in Macao in 1570 and died in India in 1651. Between 1630 and 1636 he was engaged on his *Conquista*, consciously as an answer to the allegations of Maffei. He writes in minute detail of all the work of the Franciscans from the time of their first arrival in India; it is difficult to find all that he writes interesting, but he does give an impression of zeal and at times of saintliness among the friars. It was believed that the work had been entirely lost, but a manuscript was discovered in 1924 in the Vatican library by the historian of Franciscan missions Leonard Lemmens, and thus a large gap in our knowledge has been closed.<sup>94</sup> One of the notable achievements of the Franciscans was the opening of a college 'where they would do nothing else but study'. A vivid description of the opening of the college on 13 July 1618 is given by Paul, who was present on the occasion, and, as noted elsewhere, in his capacity as *lector* in theology gave the first lecture. The course of studies, which lasted six years, included the arts (philosophy), theology, and the languages of the country (Konkanī) for those who would be called to work in the parishes.<sup>95</sup>

For the later years of the seventeenth century the work of Paul can be supplemented by the laborious researches of Fr Achilles Meersman OFM, by whom the work of the Franciscans in all parts of India is displayed with a large accumulation of detail.<sup>96</sup>

One of the important aspects of Franciscan work to which Fr Meersman rightly draws attention is the study of Indian languages, especially Konkanī.<sup>97</sup> Instructions had frequently been issued by the king of Portugal and other authorities to the effect that priests should not be appointed to the care of parishes, unless they knew the local language.<sup>98</sup> In 1639 the general chapter of the Franciscans set forth a decree to the same effect. That the decree did not remain a dead letter is clear from a list of Franciscans who were the authors of books in the Konkanī language.<sup>99</sup> Undoubtedly the most distinguished of these was Gaspar de San Miguel, who in addition to a considerable number of other works produced a Konkanī grammar and a Konkanī-Portuguese dictionary. A copy of the grammar was discovered not long ago among the Marsden manuscripts in the school of Oriental and African Studies in London. Fr Meersman pays it the compliment of stating that it is perhaps the best grammar of Konkanī ever written, and that it will contribute towards settling the question whether Konkanī is a language in its own right or a dialect of Marāthī.<sup>100</sup>

The great days of the Franciscans may have been in the sixteenth and not in the seventeenth century. Convents were, indeed, maintained in a number of places, some in the neighbourhood of Goa but others in places as far away as Negapatam. Fr Clement in the report already referred to says that in the year 1667 the Franciscans had under their care in Goa (with which he probably includes the island of Bardez) 35,000 Christians. But the general

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impression is that of carrying on work that had already been started rather than of venturing out into unreached and unexplored fields.<sup>101</sup>

The discalced Carmelites came to Goa in 1616, but had great difficulty establishing themselves. By papal order they were exempt from the jurisdiction of the Portuguese prelates, and these naturally put every possible difficulty in their way. Many of the Carmelites were Italians and therefore not readily acceptable to the Portuguese, a difficulty that pursued them throughout the century until at last in 1709 they were glad to hand over their work in Goa to the Oratorians. When the East India Company took over Bombay from the British crown in 1668, they invited the Carmelites in. Their purpose was to get rid of the Franciscans and the secular clergy who were subject to the king of Portugal, and to replace them by others whose lives would not be complicated by a dual loyalty.

One among these Carmelites attained to episcopal dignity.<sup>102</sup> Fr Peter Paul of St Francis, a member of an aristocratic family resident in the neighbourhood of Naples and a nephew of Pope Innocent XI,<sup>103</sup> had joined the Carmelites in 1673, and was in Malabar in 1680. The Indian vicar apostolic of Mogor, Custodius de Pinho, had died in 1695. On 20 September 1696 Peter Paul was appointed to succeed him, with the title of archbishop of Ancyra *i.p.i.* The new archbishop arrived in Surat in 1699, but never took up his appointment, since he died in that place on 4 January 1700.<sup>104</sup>

The Theatines<sup>105</sup> reached India, by way of Aleppo and the Persian Gulf, in 1640. Some members of the team pressed forward into the interior in the hope of founding a mission in the kingdom of Golconda. Some initial success was enjoyed, but, after the death of the devoted Fr Manco in Bimlipatam, it was found impossible to maintain the mission. In the meantime, those who had stayed in Goa found a great field of work in the city and its environs. Through lack of adequate pastoral care, many Christians had not once received holy communion, not so much as in the hour of death. Fr Ardizzone set himself with vigour against this abuse, with such success that he is said to have brought 100,000 unchurched Christians back to their duties and to holy communion.

The question of giving communion to Indian Christians came up again in the days of Archbishop Francis of the Martyrs (1636–52). The Theatine Fathers were successful in bringing about a public discussion on the question whether holy communion should be given to such Christians at Easter time, and also as the *viaticum* in the hour of death. The question was resolved in favour of the Indian Christians, and a decree to this effect was promulgated by the archbishop and a copy sent to all priests.<sup>106</sup>

### *Other Roman Catholic Missions*

Various attempts were made to get rid of the Theatines, as of other non-Portuguese missionaries; but with the help of one viceroy after another they managed to hold on. Like others, they found themselves constantly understaffed. Among those who continued to serve, Fr Ferrarini distinguished himself by reconciling two parties among the canons of Goa who found themselves locked in a bitter dispute after the death of the archbishop Antony Brandão, and by taking into his house four young Brāhmans whom he prepared for the priesthood. One of them was Thomas de Castro, whom we have already met as the vicar apostolic of Kanara.<sup>107</sup>

It is interesting to note that this mission was joined in 1701 by two Englishmen, Frs Alexander Hamilton and John Milton. The former of these died on the journey and never set foot in India. Relations between the English and the Theatines seem always to have been particularly good.<sup>108</sup> In 1693 a Theatine from the Valtelline named John Clerici found himself on the coast of Coromandel. The English in Fort St David (Cuddalore) invited him to become chaplain to the Roman Catholics in that station, an invitation which he accepted. When he died in 1694, the English called in his place another Theatine, Fr William delle Valle, to become the permanent chaplain of Fort St David, a post which he accepted, but without the good will of the bishop of Mylapore.

The Capuchins did not arrive in India till 1630. It was the intention of the authorities that a mission should be started in Pegu; but the two French Capuchins selected for this purpose got no further than Masulipatam. There, like the Theatines, they made friends with the English. At that time Madras was growing from a village into a considerable town (by 1670 the Indian population was reckoned at 40,000). Many Roman Catholics had been drawn there by the conditions of safety and good order which were guaranteed by the British. With so many Christians of that persuasion under their care, the British decided, perhaps as early as 1650, to invite the Capuchins to come and accept spiritual responsibility for them. So Fr Ephraim of Nevers with a companion, known as Fr Zeno or Zenon, accepted the invitation. Before long they found themselves in charge of a mixed multitude of 10,000 persons of various races and languages. Fr Ephraim was skilled in both Portuguese and in the Indian languages, and also proved extremely useful to the English in the settlement of disputes. But his popularity with the English was balanced by his unpopularity with the Portuguese. Tavernier<sup>109</sup> tells a fantastic story, to the effect that Ephraim was kidnapped by the Portuguese, taken to Mylapore, and from there shipped off to the dungeons of the Inquisition at Goa. In retaliation the English arrested the Portuguese governor of Mylapore and incarcerated him in the Capuchin convent of Madras. The governor managed to escape; but it



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was only through the intervention of the king of Golconda that the imprisoned Capuchin recovered his liberty.<sup>110</sup>

The attitude of the English merchants resident in Madras (unlike that of their directors in London) towards the Capuchins was generally kindly and forbearing. The merchants helped them to build their first church in the Fort; when it was consecrated in 1675, the governor ordered salutes to be fired in honour of the occasion.<sup>111</sup>

These scattered notices of the work of various religious orders in India gives some indication of the number of religious persons, so far all males (with the exception of the sisterhood noted above) engaged in the work of the church in India, and also of the ineffectiveness of their efforts. Much courage and devotion were displayed, many enterprises were set on foot. But there was a lack of that massive strategic sense and continuous support which had led to the success of so many of the great ventures of the sixteenth century.

For much of this, circumstances largely outside the control of the church can be regarded as responsible. Before the end of the century the decline of Mughul power was irreversible. A century of weakness and disorder, inaugurated by Śivājī's raid on Ahmadnagar in 1657, was brought to an end only by the decisive victory of the British arms at Plassey in 1757 and by the gradual extension of British power which followed. Times of disorder are naturally unfavourable to the work of Christian missions. Furthermore, the power of Portugal was no longer adequate to bear the weight of empire and to sustain a monopoly of Christian missions in Asia. That monopoly had been breached by the work of Propaganda and by the admission to India of missionaries of other nations. But Portugal held up progress by refusal to admit any diminution of its privileges and to recognise the international character of the church. The Dutch and the English had introduced a new, permanent and divisive factor in the situation. Inevitably this brought about confusion on the political scene. It also introduced, though as yet in rather feeble fashion, the possibility of a Christian presence throughout India other than the Roman Catholic, in what Portugal had intended to be a purely Roman Catholic empire.

The seventeenth century had dawned with auguries of fair promise for the church. By the end the clouds had gathered. The old India was on its way to dissolution; the time had not yet come for the new India to be born.

## 15 · Non-Roman Catholic Christianity in India

### I ANGLICAN BEGINNINGS

The first half of the seventeenth century in Europe was an intensely religious age. The new counter-reformation piety was finding expression in such works as the *Introduction to the Devout Life* of Francis de Sales, bishop of Geneva (1567–1622). Lancelot Andrewes, bishop of Winchester (1555–1626), and George Herbert (1593–1633), were producing imperishable memorials of Anglican devotion. The work, however, which perhaps more than any other gave expression to the new age came from Holland. That universal genius Hugo Grotius produced in 1627 his work *de Veritate Christianae Religionis*. This book marked a new beginning in ecumenical thinking.

At that time the missionary awakening of the Protestant churches had hardly begun. But the capacious mind of Grotius reached out far beyond his native Holland. He saw that the expansion of European influence in the world must be accompanied, if Europe was to be true to its great traditions, by an extension of Christian concern. He wrote his book in the hope that it might be useful to mariners voyaging to the far places of the earth. For missionary purposes the *de Veritate* was translated into Arabic (1660) by the eminent Arabist Edward Pocock (1604–91), the expenses of the edition being borne by Robert Boyle (1627–91). It appears that it was translated also into Persian, Chinese and Malay.<sup>1</sup>

The founders of the English East India Company belonged to that race of sober, pious London burgesses, who took pleasure in the sermons of John Donne, and, though of a somewhat puritanical cast of thinking, had not found it necessary to separate themselves from the Church of England as by law established. They held the view that commerce cannot be a glorious enterprise, if it limits its objectives to those things after which the Gentiles seek.

The concern of these founders for spiritual realities is seen in the commission which they issued to the general for the very first voyage carried out on their behalf in the East:

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for that religious government doth best mind men to perform their duties, it is principally to be cared for that prayers be said morning and evening in every ship, and the whole company called thereunto with diligent eyes, that none be wanting, so that all may jointly with reverence and humility pray unto Almighty God to bless and preserve them from all dangers in their long and tedious voyage.

It was not likely that such instructions would be carried out unless chaplains were appointed to the larger ships. So the first Anglican clergymen in the East were ships' chaplains. The question of appointing Company's chaplains to reside in India arose only when the English, like the Portuguese, discovered that enterprises in the East cannot be maintained without the presence of permanent or semi-permanent residents, to care for them in the intervals between the coming and going of fleets.

Anglican history in the East begins with the redoubtable Sir Thomas Roe (1581–1644), the first English ambassador to the Great Mogul.<sup>2</sup> Roe's journals reveal him as much more than a conventionally Christian man. As a royal ambassador Roe was entitled to be accompanied by a chaplain. To this office he had appointed the Reverend John Hall, whom in a letter to the Company dated 24 November 1616 he described as 'one of the best and quietest and humblest men that ever I knew'.<sup>3</sup>

To Roe's great grief, Hall died soon after their arrival in India.<sup>4</sup> The ambassador was sick and discouraged. His loneliness was increased by the loss of one of the few companions to whom he could talk with unrestrained ease. Shortly after his loss he wrote to the representatives of the Company at Surat to send him a replacement: 'Here I cannot live the life of an atheist, lett me desire yow to endeavour my supply, for I will not abyde in this place destitute of the comfort of Gods woord and heavenly sacraments.'<sup>5</sup>

Fortunately the very next season brought to Surat a fleet accompanied by two young chaplains. Of one of them the factors wrote (26 September 1616): 'The graver of the two, about twenty-five years of age, is called Edward Terry; was a fellow of Corpus Christi College in Oxford. He is very desirous to stave in the country, and . . . would willingly embrace your Lordships service. The General hath spoken to me in his behalf and given him fair commendations.'<sup>6</sup>

Terry, a highly intelligent man, twice wrote down his recollections of all that he had seen and heard during his two and a half years in India.<sup>7</sup> The first version, a short and vivid account written soon after his return to England, was presented to the Prince Charles in 1622.<sup>8</sup> It contains almost all the information of value that has been set forth again at wearisome length in Terry's second effort as a writer, the 571 pages of his *A Voyage to East-India* (1655).

Of the scenery and natural products of the regions in India that he knew – parts of Mālwa and Gujarāt – Terry gives such a glowing account that he himself realises that he may be misleading his readers by giving the

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impression that 'this remote countrye should seeme like an earthly paradise without any discommodities' (p. 303). He notes with approval 'mangoes, (in shape and colour like to our apricocks, but more luscious)', and 'to conclude with the best of all, the ananas or pine, which seems to the taster to be a pleasing compound made of strawberries, claret-wine, rose-water, and sugar, well tempered together' (p. 297). He praises the variety of 'partridges, quailles, peacockes and many other singular good fowle', with the curious addition that 'there are no capons among them but men' (pp. 296-7).

Terry recognises clearly the distinction between Muslims and Hindus and gives an accurate delineation of their customs as seen by an outsider. He has some knowledge of the tenets of the two religions, but only such as can be acquired by casual conversation. He excuses himself from expatiating on them further in the words:

It were easy to enlarge, but I will not cast away inke and paper in a farther description of their stupid idolatries. The summe is that both Mahometans and Gentiles ground their opinions on tradition, not reason; and are content to perish with their fore-fathers, out of a preposterous zeale and loving perverseness, never ruminating on that they maintayne, like to uncleane beasts, which chew not the cud.<sup>9</sup>

Of Jahāngīr he writes penetratingly, noting the contradictions in his character – 'the Kings disposition seemes compounded of extreames – very cruell, and otherwhiles very milde; often overcome with wine, but severely punishing that fault in others' (pp. 330-1). For his tolerance in religion he has nothing but praise – 'all religions are tolerated, and their priests in good esteeme. My selfe often received from the Mogoll himselfe the appellation of Father, with other many gracious words, with place among the best nobles.' By the work of the Jesuits he was not favourably impressed: 'the truth is they have spilt the water of baptisme on some faces, working on the necessities of poore men, who for want of meanes, which they give them, are content to wear crucifixes, but for want of instruction are only in name Christians'.<sup>10</sup> Of his own ministrations he writes nothing, assuming, perhaps, that his readers will know already the kind of work in which he was engaged. He would have liked to set about some missionary work, but did not know how to make a start.

The thought of preaching the Gospel of Christ in the non-Christian world was not absent from the minds of Christians in England in the seventeenth century.

The first seriously to embrace the idea seems to have been that man of broad and comprehensive mind, Oliver Cromwell. He had plans for a Protestant Propaganda to balance that which already existed in Rome.

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There were to be four provinces with a secretary for each, the fourth province to be that of the East and West Indies. The aim was to carry on correspondence with every part of the world, 'to know the state of religion all over the world, that so all good designs might be by their means assisted and protected'. Funds were to be placed at the disposal of the secretaries for use in emergencies. Cromwell's time of rule was short; this was one among many plans which he entertained but was not able to put into execution.<sup>11</sup>

Another man of far-reaching mind who was concerned for the spread of the Gospel was the admirable but not always prudent Richard Baxter (1615–91).<sup>12</sup> From him the concern was transmitted to Robert Boyle, whose interest in chemistry was equalled by his concern for the defence and extension of the Christian faith. Boyle communicated his concern to the celebrated Dr John Fell, dean of Christ Church, and later bishop of Oxford (1625–86), who was so much interested that he declared himself ready to have men trained in Arabic at Oxford with a view to ministry abroad. On 21 June 1681 Fell wrote to Archbishop Sancroft of Canterbury:

It so happened that we fell into discourse of the East India Company [of which Boyle was a director] and I enlarged upon the shame that lay upon us, who had so great opportunities by our commerce in the East, that we had attempted nothing towards the conversion of the Natives, when not only the papists, but even the Hollanders, had laboured herein.<sup>13</sup>

Fell died in 1686, and for the moment interest in the project lapsed. But some years later the notable orientalist Humphrey Prideaux, dean of Norwich (1648–1724), returned to the charge, with a work entitled, *An Account of the English settlements in the East Indies, together with some proposals for the propagation of Christianity in those parts of the world*. Like Fell, Prideaux points to the example of the Dutch, and contrasts it with the negligence of the English company. What, then, is to be done? It is at this point that the mind of Prideaux shows itself surprisingly modern; the only solution is the preparation of workers specially for the task of evangelisation, and to this end a seminary must be set up in England 'for training persons for the work, and that those to be trained be poor boys out of the hospitals of London, whose fortunes could give them no temptation, when trained, to refuse the work'. He proceeds that 'after a time the persons to be prepared for this duty at a seminary should be brought from India; and that, when Christianity should have made sufficient progress in those parts to encourage the settling of a Bishop in India, the seminary should be removed thither, and placed under the charge and government of the Bishop.'<sup>14</sup>

For the time being the dreams of Prideaux remained dreams, but dreams not without a certain efficacy. In 1698 a new charter for the East India Company was drawn up, and contained something unknown to any previous charter. The Company are instructed to maintain:

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One Minister in every Garrison and superior Factory, which the same Company, or their Successors, shall have in the said East-Indies . . . and shall also, in such Garrison and Factories respectively, provide, or set apart, a decent and convenient Place for Divine Service only; and shall also take a Chaplain on board every Ship which shall be sent by the same Company to the said East-Indies . . . which shall be of the Burthen of Five Hundred Tons, or upwards for such voyage . . . And we do further will and appoint that all such Ministers as shall be sent to reside in *India*, as aforesaid, shall be obliged to learn, within One Year after their arrival, the *Portuguese* language, and shall apply themselves to learn the Native Language of the Country where they shall reside, the better to enable them to instruct the Gentoos, that shall be the Servants or Slaves of the same Company, or of their Agents, in the Protestant Religion, and that in the case of the Death of any of the said Ministers, residing in the *East Indies* . . . the Place of such Minister, so dying, shall be supplied by One of the Chaplains out of the next Ships that shall arrive at or near the Place where such Minister shall happen to die.<sup>15</sup>

This was something new. For the first time, the Company accepted a measure of spiritual responsibility for all those in its service, whether Christians or non-Christians. This was not a charter for unrestricted evangelisation among the non-Christian peoples of India; but at least it was recognised that ministrations to Europeans alone would not suffice, and that the Company must accept a larger responsibility.

Information about chaplains in the service of the East India Company is fragmentary and has had to be collected from many different sources.<sup>16</sup> For a general view of their position and duties we cannot do better than turn to Richard Ovington, whose *Voyage to Suratt in the year 1689* was published in 1696.<sup>17</sup> Ovington was the equal of Terry as an observer. He tells us less than Terry about the Indians and their ways, but more about the English and the kind of life they led so far from home.

The factory at Surat was a capacious edifice, strongly built and adequate to the housing of all the leading people of the English community. The president lived in considerable state, and never went abroad without that parade of magnificence which was intended to impress upon the Indians the greatness of English power. The organisation of life in the factory was a little like that of an Oxford or Cambridge college. None was allowed to leave the factory without 'liberty' from the president, and all were expected to be in at a reasonable hour of the evening. Every day there was a common meal, which all were expected to attend and at which the fare was sumptuous enough to provide for the entertainment of any person of eminence in the kingdom.

The chaplain was regarded as the third, or even as the second, man in the establishment. 'There is a stated salary of a Hundred Pounds a year appointed for a Minister, with Diet and convenient Lodgings, a Peon to

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attend him in his Chamber, and the command of a Coach or Horse, at any time he thinks fit to use them.' The chaplain being debarred by his vocation from engaging in trade, his remuneration may seem rather meagre even allowing for the difference in the value of money between those days and these. But, apart from presents which seem to have come in with some regularity, he was entitled to receive fees for baptisms, marriages (if any), and funerals (all too many in those days of high mortality among European residents in the East).<sup>18</sup> Altogether, provision for the needs of the chaplains may be regarded as having been at least adequate.<sup>19</sup>

The minister was under obligation to read prayers three times on a Sunday and to preach once, and on other days to read the prayers in the morning at about 6 a.m., and at 8 at night, when all the business of the day was finished. All resident in the factory were required to be present at prayers, and could be fined for non-attendance. Today this might seem to be a grievous application of compulsion in matters of religion; but many of the young employees of the Company had come from schools in England in which the habit of prayers twice a day had been sedulously maintained, and some from families in whose homes a chaplain resided to teach the younger members of the family and to provide for the daily reading of morning and evening prayer. The imposition of the fine does not seem to have been a cause of grave complaint; the money raised in this way was used for the creation of a charitable fund.<sup>20</sup>

A letter of Streynsham Master of 18 January 1672 tells us that 'he that omitts Prayer on a weeke day pays 2s.6d., on Sunday 5s.' – a considerable sum in those days. Master adds, that 'here is a most excellent govern'd Factory, indeed more like unto a Colledge, Monasterie, or a house under Religious orders than any others'.<sup>21</sup>

One notable omission, which contrasts strongly with the custom of the Portuguese, is that until 1680 there was no church building. Ovington notes that 'the Chappel, where they meet at prayers is within the Factory, decently embellisht, so as to make it both neat and solemn, without the Figure of any living creature in it, for avoiding all occasion of offence to the *Moors*, who are well pleas'd with the Innocence of our Worship'.<sup>22</sup> Hinduism is a religion of processions and of magnificent public ceremonies. The private and family character of Protestant worship, at which it was unlikely that any Hindu or Muslim would be present, may be one reason for the strange idea prevalent among Indians that Protestants had no religion.

One interesting exception to the rule should be noted. On 8 December 1678 Shāh Raza, one of the principal ministers of the king of Golconda, at his own request was present at divine service in the chapel at Masulipatam. On the following Sunday the king himself was present, attended by Shāh Raza and some few of his principal servants. He stayed till the end of the

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service, and was much impressed by the fact that even the ladies of the congregation could read. He satisfied himself of this strange phenomenon by asking two of the ladies present to read aloud to him.<sup>23</sup>

### 2 CHURCHES AND CHAPLAINS

It must not be supposed that all English life in India was as decorous as might be inferred from the account given by Ovington. The English were faced with the same problem as the Portuguese in Goa. The number of foreigners resident in India was steadily increasing. Not all the servants of the Company kept the rules; we find the authorities in London complaining of 'the disorderly and Unchristian Conversation of some of their Factors and Servants in the parts of India, tending to the dishonour of God, the discredit of the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the shame and Scandal of the English Nation'.<sup>24</sup> There were soldiers of the garrison and servants of the factors. There were English sailors, unemployed during the long waits between voyages. There were women who had come out in the hope of getting married, not all of them of perfectly virtuous life, and the usual miscellany of merchants, adventurers and ne'er do wells, and foreigners of one kind and another who had become attached to the English community. The chapel in the factory would hardly provide adequate spiritual care for so mixed a multitude.

Bombay<sup>25</sup> has the distinction of being the first city in India in which the proposal to build an Anglican church was made. The proposal came from the Court in London, but it was warmly taken up by the president Sir George Oxenden, one of the most outstanding men ever to serve the Company in India. It is to be noted that the church, to seat about a thousand people, was to be built with a definite missionary purpose – that the natives should repair to church, 'and observe the purity and gravity of our devotions'. The same interest was expressed by a later and almost equally distinguished governor, Gerald Aungier; the purpose of building the church is to exercise a good influence on the natives, so that 'when the merciful pleasure of God shall think good to touch them with a sense of the eternal welfare of their souls, they may be convinced of their error, sensible of their present dangerous uncertain wanderings, and desirous to render themselves happy in a more sure way of salvation, which we pray God grant in His good time'.<sup>26</sup>

Five thousand pounds were raised by public subscription, and the walls rose to a height of fifteen feet. For a considerable time interest lapsed, and the work was not completed until 1718; on Christmas Day of that year service was held for the first time in St Thomas' Church. The planning was



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so ample that, when the Anglican diocese of Bombay was formed in 1837, St Thomas' immediately became the cathedral church of the new diocese; it still serves the same purpose as the cathedral of the Bombay diocese of the Church of North India.<sup>27</sup>

Madras had better fortune. Under the vigorous leadership of Streynsham Master the good citizens set to work to raise money for a church, to work out the plans and to complete the building without any consultation with the authorities in England and without making any appeal for help. Work was started in March 1678. A year later a substantial church 86 feet (24.6 m) long and 56 feet (15.4 m) broad stood ready and waiting for consecration.

The problems arising out of the request for this ceremony are an interesting commentary on the difficulties faced by the Anglican establishment in India. The consecration of a church is a legal as well as an ecclesiastical rite. It can be carried out only by a bishop, or by one expressly commissioned by him for that purpose. All Anglicans outside the British Isles were under the jurisdiction of the bishop of London. But Richard Portman, the chaplain in Madras, though in Anglican orders and regularly appointed by the East India Company, held no position in the diocese of London and had no licence from that bishop.<sup>28</sup> So a whole series of documents, in the florid ecclesiastical Latin of that time, had to be produced, starting with the oaths and subscriptions to be taken by Richard Portman before he could receive his licence.<sup>29</sup> All this having been carried out in order due, on 28 October 1680 Portman and all the leading Anglicans in Madras joined in the solemn ceremony of the consecration. The record in the council's Consultation Book reads as follows: 'The solemnity was performed in very good order, and concluded with vollies of small shot fired by the whole garrison drawn out, and the cannon round the Fort. The Church named St Mary's as at first intended, and from this time forward all public service to be there performed.'<sup>30</sup>

Madras had a considerable population of Roman Catholics of Portuguese or part-Portuguese origin. French priests were made welcome and allowed to minister to these Christians of their persuasion. It had been made clear, however, that this did not include ministrations to members of the English community which were the concern solely of the Company's chaplains. In 1680 an English merchant married a Portuguese widow, and the marriage was solemnised by a Portuguese priest from neighbouring Mylapore. To this the authorities took the gravest exception. The priest had wisely fled to avoid the disciplinary action to which he had made himself liable. Intermarriage as such was not objected to; many soldiers of the garrison had taken 'Portuguese' wives and had been married by the chaplains. It now seemed to the authorities wise to regulate the matter more exactly, and to

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make sure that the children of such marriages were to be regarded as belonging to the English and not to the Portuguese community. In March 1680 the following decision was reached:

That upon the marriage of a Protestant with a Roman Catholic, both the parties to be married shall solemnly promise before one of the Chaplains of the place, by themselves or some for them, before the banns shall be published, and also in the chapel or Church by themselves in person, upon the day of marriage and before the parties shall be married, that all the children by them begotten and borne shall be brought up in the Protestant religion; and herein due care shall always be taken by the overseers of the orphans and the poor.<sup>31</sup>

A number of sailors and others had married Indian women. So much trouble had arisen out of marriage with Roman Catholics that both the authorities in Madras and the directors in London agreed that marriage with Indian women was more desirable as an answer to the needs of the troops in India. So a decree was issued on 8 April 1687, to the effect that:

The marriage of our soldiers to the native women of Fort St George, formerly recommended by you, is a matter of such consequence to posterity that we shall be content to encourage it with some expense, and have been thinking for the future to appoint a Pagoda [=4 rupees] to be paid to the mother of any child that shall hereafter be born of any such future marriage upon the day the child is Christened.<sup>32</sup>

It is perhaps due to these measures that Madras has always had a large and highly respected community of those formerly known as Eurasians but since 1900 designated Anglo-Indians.

But marriage with Roman Catholics continued. The only remedy seemed to be to start Anglican services in Portuguese, the *lingua franca* of the coast, understood by many 'who have no place to hear the Word of God in a language they understand, . . . If they had God's word preached to them in the Portuguese language according to the Protestant Doctrines and Prayers of the Church of England, they would as readily frequent the Protestant Church as the Popish chapels.' So the Company would have the Prayer Book translated into Portuguese.<sup>33</sup> And only a year later they were able to inform the president Elihu Yale, later famous in American history, that they had been able to send two sober, able learned ministers, one of whom, Mr Lewes, was recommended to be the first minister of the Portuguese Protestant Church.<sup>34</sup>

Madras also took the lead in providing education for children of Europeans, and for part-European part-Indian children in some way connected with the service of the Company. One John Barham was appointed master in 1682, and seems to have held the office till 1717. This was the first small beginning of the immense educational work of the Anglican church in India.

## *Churches and Chaplains*

Chaplains came and went. Some were good and others were bad, the majority were neither very good nor very bad, but on the whole good rather than bad. It may be convenient to consider first two who must be considered unsatisfactory, and then two who stood out conspicuously by their intelligence and virtues.

The astonishing story of Mr Gouldinge, was related by Captain Martin Pring in a letter from Surat dated 18 March 1618.<sup>35</sup> Gouldinge had come to India in the good ship *Anne*, which reached Swally Roads on 24 September 1617. During his stay in Surat, where he solemnised the marriage of Mr Richard Steel to his lady, he had devoted himself markedly to the service of 'the gentlewomen'. When 'the gentlewomen' were to depart for Amadavare (Ahmadābād), he was most anxious to accompany them; permission having been firmly refused, he fitted himself out with 'Moore's apparel', and took his way to the forbidden place. The virtuous Sir Thomas Roe was naturally much incensed by such gallivanting, and sent him back to Surat with a stern reprimand. Gouldinge did not immediately return; but at the end of the letter already quoted, Pring remarks sadly, 'The strayed minister is since returned to his flocke. I have pardoned his rebellions, negligences and ignoraunces, in hopes hee wilbecome a new man.'<sup>36</sup>

John Evans was a Welshman (and Welsh-speaker), who like so many of his fellow-countrymen went to Jesus College, Oxford, and took the degree of BA in 1671. In 1677 he was appointed to the staff of the East India Company as chaplain, and arrived in India on 20 June 1678. He was the first chaplain specifically appointed to 'the Bay', and had under his charge, together with Hügli, the factories at Balasore, Kasimbazar, Malda, Patna and Dacca. Evans was involved in the troubles which led to the expulsion of the British from Bengal, and with the others reached Fort St George in February or March 1689. There he assisted the local chaplains, at least until April 1691. He may then have spent some time in Bengal, but his name appears once more in the register of St Mary's in Madras as having solemnised a marriage there in November 1692.

Evans was a happily married man, and no objections were raised against his moral character in the narrower sense of that term. The height and front of his offence was that he was passionately and continuously engaged in trade. Chaplains, like other officers of the Company, were debarred from trading in their own right. Many interpreted this prohibition as referring only to trade with England, which was clearly the monopoly of the Company, and did engage in local enterprises some of which could be extremely profitable. In a number of places in the records it is noted with regret that one chaplain and another had taken advantage of such opportunities, it being thought below the dignity of their vocation to engage in commercial activities. Evans seems to have had no inhibitions, and to

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have engaged in trade in every possible direction. But the gravest of all the crimes with which he was charged was that he had a great deal to do with the Interlopers, the independent traders who had no licence from the Company, were increasing in numbers, and were already engaged in the plans which led in 1698 to the formation of the rival company.

There are a number of allusions in the surviving records to these activities. For instance, William Hedges, who was for a time the Company's agent in Bengal, reports that 'Agent Beard, Mr Evans (the Minister), and Mr Trenchfield are very often in company with the Interlopers, especially the two latter who are seldom out of their company.'<sup>37</sup>

When news of these doings reached London, the Court, in a letter written as it seems sometime in 1691, comments bitterly on 'the quondam Minister but late great Merchant'. On 28 January 1692, they write more officially: 'Mr Evans having betaken himself so entirely to Merchandizing, we are not willing to continue any further Salary or allowances to him after the arrival of our two Ministers we are now sending you.'

Evans had difficulty in getting away from India; eventually he managed, somewhat surreptitiously, to secure a passage on a ship leaving about the beginning of February 1694, and was back in England in August of that year after an absence of sixteen years, spent not unprofitably to himself.

After his return to England Evans engaged in politics, taking up an advanced position on the Whig side of the fence. This no doubt commended him to William III. In 1701 he was appointed bishop of Bangor, thus returning to the area in which he was born.<sup>38</sup> In 1716 he obtained the position of bishop of Meath, the premier bishopric of the Church of Ireland.<sup>39</sup> He died suddenly in March 1724. In a somewhat florid Latin epitaph set up by his wife, we are told that 'it was always his principal concern to fulfil the ministry which he had received in the Lord', and that in both his dioceses he was 'a most vigilant pastor'. This may have been so; it cannot be said that in his years in India he was a priest of unblemished reputation.<sup>40</sup>

The first of our two virtuous chaplains is the Reverend Patrick Copeland (or Copland, both spellings are used) who travelled to India on the same ship as the egregious Gouldinge. Captain Pring remarks on the two men in pleasant contrast:

When I consider the vanity of this man, I praise God that sent Mr Copeland with me, whose virtuous life, suiting so well with his sound doctrine, is the only means to draw men unto God, and that ought to be your Worships chiefest care in these voyadges, to choose men that are approved for theyr sincerity, that they may be good examples to theyr flocke.<sup>41</sup>

More is known about Copeland than about most of the chaplains of the seventeenth century. All that is known is good. He has a special place in this

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history as having been concerned in the baptism of the first Indian who is known to have become an Anglican.

In 1614 it was reported that one Captain Best had brought to England a young Indian said to have been born in the Bay of Bengala.<sup>42</sup> The boy was handed over to Patrick Copeland, with the request that he would have him 'taught and instructed in religion that hereafter he might upon occasion be sent unto his country, where God may be pleased to make him an instrument in converting some of his nation'. A year later Copeland was able to report that the boy had made so much progress in knowledge of the Christian religion that he is now able to give an account of his faith, and asking what steps he should take to arrange for his baptism, 'being of opinion that it were fitt to have it publicly effected, being the first fruits of India'. There being no precedent, the Court thought that it might be prudent to consult the archbishop of Canterbury; that prelate having expressed the opinion that there could be no objection, the baptism was put in hand. King James I was himself interested; on being asked to give a name to the young man, he provided the name Peter, hoping no doubt that on this rock God would build his church in India. The baptism took place on 22 December 1616 in the church of St Dionis Backchurch, Fenchurch Street.<sup>43</sup> An immense crowd assembled, including members of the Privy Council, the Lord Mayor and Aldermen of London, members of the East India Company and of the Virginia Company.

In 1617 Copeland set off on another journey, accompanied by Peter, and returned without him in 1621. Presumably the convert was left somewhere in his native land. Nothing definite is known of his subsequent career. But he does make one further appearance in history. In 1622 Copeland was called to preach before the Virginia Council. His sermon, *Virginia's God be Thanked* was printed, and as an Appendix are included three letters written by Peter in 1620 in the florid Latin of that day. If these were really written by Peter himself, they are evidence of the excellence of the teaching that he had received.<sup>44</sup> After this, nothing more is heard of him. Copeland's career continued to be distinguished. He became a member of the Council of State in Virginia, and it is stated that he was appointed rector of a college for the conversion of the American Indians. He appears to have ended his days in Bermuda.<sup>45</sup>

The second of our virtuous chaplains is the Reverend Henry Lord, who arrived in Surat in 1624. The president of the time, Thomas Kerridge, was urgent with Lord to attempt to make his way into the beliefs and customs of the Hindus, a subject of importance to those who resided in their midst. Lord was eager to undertake the work in gratitude for the favour shown him by Kerridge, 'who, to give this undertaking the better promotion, interested himself in the works by mediating my acquaintance with the *Bramanes*,

whose eminence of place was an attraction to draw on this discovery and manifestation'.<sup>46</sup>

So Lord set himself to work with his Indian helpers, and gradually his work was brought to completion. It was highly praised by the eminent orientalist Sir William Jones, who writes that 'the inhabitants of this extensive tract are described by Mr Lord with great exactness, and with a picturesque eloquence peculiar to our ancient language'.<sup>47</sup>

At certain points the account given by Lord is vivid and accurate. His account of Hindu practices relating to marriage is clearly based on careful inquiry.<sup>48</sup> He gives details of the cremation of the dead as practised in his day, and adds a note on Satī – 'the examples be more rare now than in former times'. Where, however, he tries to deal with questions of philosophy and religion, he is less successful and does not penetrate far below the level of Purāṇic legend. His most extraordinary error relates to the four castes. He is right about the Brāhmins and the 'Cutteries' (Kṣatriyas). But he affirms that the 'Shuddery' (Sūdras), were appointed by Puruṣa to follow the profession of merchandize, 'and all such as live in the nature of merchants are comprized under this name, and belong to this cast'.<sup>49</sup> He is less than accurate in describing the 'Wyses' (Vaiśyas), the great trading caste, whose ancestor 'was the master of the mechanics or handicrafts, so all manufactory men were to belong to the cast of the Wyses'.

To Lord belongs the credit of being the first European to identify the community of the Parsis, and to recognise all that distinguishes them both from Hindus and from Muslims. With the help of a Parsi, 'whose long employment in the companies service had brought him to a mediocrity in the *English* tongue', he approached 'one of their church-men called their Daroo' and attempted to penetrate the veil which had so long covered the Parsi religion. In this he was much less successful than Anquetil-Duperron a century and a half later. Lord had discovered that the Parsis had a sacred book called the 'Zundervastan' (*Zendavesta*), but he seems to have little or no access to it, even through interpreters. He had also ascertained the name of the prophet 'Zertoost' (Zarathustra), and some of his historical notices seem to be correct. He is correct also in what he writes about the Parsi manner of the disposal of the dead. But he was not in a position to distinguish fact from fiction, nor to give such an account of the religion as would have been possible if he had been able to acquire some knowledge of the Gāthās and of the Zoroastrian faith in its oldest and purest form.<sup>50</sup>

The English chaplains in India have not on the whole been well reported of by English writers. The delinquencies of the few have been expanded into a condemnation of the many. The chaplains seem, in point of fact, to have been on the whole creditable representatives of their church at a time at

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which religion was a major concern both in England and in the English settlements overseas. F. Penny lists twenty-two chaplains appointed to Fort St George in the period covered by this volume. Some were better than others; but in the records there are many references to the excellent character of chaplains, of which the following, referring to the Reverend Patrick Warner, may be taken as an example: 'he is truly a person of those abilities piety and meekness, so becoming that holy calling, that we hope he will be the means of much good unto your people here, and wish we could prevail with him to make a longer abode amongst us; or if not that his successor may resemble him.'<sup>51</sup>

The sober judgement of Dr Percival Spear, though it refers to a rather later period, may be taken as a judicious estimate of what the Anglican clergy in India were during the seventeenth century also:

The chaplains could not logically be better as a body than the class in England from which they sprang, and they were not likely to be worse than the settlers themselves . . . They were much less than fiery apostles of the faith, but also more than merely commercial parsons, and they certainly fulfilled the test of a virile priesthood in being as a whole slightly better than the rest of the population.<sup>52</sup>

### 3 THE DUTCH IN INDIA

The Dutch, no less than the English had a long history in the East. But the greater part of that history belongs to what is now called Indonesia, with outliers in Taiwan (Formosa) and Sri Lanka (Ceylon), and there is comparatively little to write about the Christian aspect of Dutch enterprise in continental India.

The course of the Reformation in the Netherlands had been far from tranquil. The assassination of William the Silent in 1584 was perhaps the lowest point in its fortunes, but was at the same time the action which steeled the resolution of the Hollanders and their determination to maintain themselves against all the Roman Catholic powers of Europe. The northern provinces, though not the southern, drove deep roots into the soil of Reformed thinking, and, nourished by the stern teachings of John Calvin, developed the same capacity as the Scots for unyielding hardness and an indomitable will to survive.

This deep Christian conviction manifested itself, among other places, in the first missionary training centre of the western world, the college founded at Leiden in 1623 under the guidance of a devout and learned teacher Antony Walaeus.<sup>53</sup> College is rather a grand name to give to a small enterprise. All that it meant was that Walaeus took into his own home a number of theological students, never more than six at a time, and undertook to give them a measure of special preparation for work in the

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Eastern regions. Among other things the students were introduced to the Malay language, and also to the rudiments of Hinduism and Islam as religious systems. Short as was its life, the college sent out to the East twelve preachers of more than ordinary devotion and competence. But after only ten years, in 1633, the college was closed, and in spite of many requests that it should be reopened,<sup>54</sup> the directors of the Dutch East India Company (VOC), obstinately stood by their decision. They pleaded the ground of economy, and added that ministers trained elsewhere were coming forward in sufficient numbers to offer themselves for service in the East. That this was no idle boast is shewn by the fact that in two centuries the company sent to the East no less than a thousand *predikanten*, apart from schoolmasters and other subordinate ministers of the church. But, as Professor C.R. Boxer tartly remarks, 'experience had shown that the graduates of the Seminarium Indicum were apt to be less amenable to the Company's officials than were *predikanten* who had been hand-picked for their docility by the regional chambers'.<sup>55</sup>

Here we encounter the basic weakness of Dutch Christian enterprise in the East. The motto of the Dutch authorities was 'thorough'; more than either Anglicans or Roman Catholics they saw to it that the ministers of the Gospel would have to exercise Christian liberty within very narrow confines indeed. The location of ministers was entirely in the hands of the governor general and council in Batavia. Even when appointed, the minister had no security of tenure in any one place, and might find himself at a moment's notice moved from one end of the Dutch sphere to the other. In theory ministers were called to exercise concern for the non-Christians around them as well as for the generally small Dutch congregations; but, if a minister had taken the trouble to learn the local language, he might find himself moved at short notice to another area where that language would be of no use to him. And any independence of thought or action was most severely frowned on.<sup>56</sup> A striking example of this is reported from the year 1653. The church council in Batavia had had the temerity to protest against a day of fasting and thanksgiving for the successes of the Dutch arms against the rebels in the Moluccas, on the ground that the war in Ambon was not a just war. They had to endure a swingeing rebuke from the governor general on the ground that they were giving a bad impression of the Company's righteous trade. The XVII Heeren in Amsterdam brought heavier artillery to bear; in future any *predikanten* guilty of a like offence were to be immediately dismissed from their office, and shipped back to the Netherlands at the earliest possible moment.<sup>57</sup>

The nature of Dutch Christian work in India is best set out by considering the work of a number of chaplains, of whose operations it is possible to give a somewhat detailed account.



## *The Dutch in India*

Among these Abraham Rogerius stands out as *facile princeps*. Born in the early years of the seventeenth century, he had studied at the college in Leiden, and in 1630 was appointed by the *classis* of Amsterdam for service in India. After a brief stay in Batavia he reached Pulicat (Pāliacatta) on 1 September 1632. Unlike so many of the *predikanten*, he was allowed to stay where he was. His service in Pulicat lasted almost exactly ten years – till 1642. Not having much to do in his ministrations to the small Dutch community, numbering probably not more than a hundred in all, he looked outward and found other employment; a letter of 9 January 1636 reports that Rogerius had begun to preach in the Portuguese language, and also that he is engaged in the study of the Malabar (Tamil) language. Here we see the genesis of his famous book *The Open Door to the hidden heathen Religion* (1651).<sup>58</sup>

Fairly early in his career Rogerius had had the good fortune to render a service to a Brāhman named Padmanābhan, who, in trouble for some indiscreet actions in his homeland, had found it wise to take refuge in the Dutch Fort Geldria. Acquaintance led to friendship, and the chaplain spent much time with the Brāhman, who had some knowledge of Portuguese (not, I think, of Dutch), questioning him on every detail of Brāhman usage, custom and religion. Other Brāhmans seem to have joined the company, and one of these, having a better knowledge of Portuguese than Padmanābhan, was able to act as interpreter. Out of these colloquies grew the book *The Open Door*.

The first twenty-one chapters deal with the life-style and customs of Hindus, starting with the four castes, and leading on to funeral customs and the immolation of the faithful Hindu wife on the pyre of her husband. In the second part, also in twenty-one chapters, we are introduced to an outline of Hindu philosophy, starting with the idea of God, leading through worship and festivals to temples and rituals, to superstitions, and to ideas of life after death. The first sentence of this second part is noteworthy: ‘no one should think that these people are simply like beasts, and that they have no knowledge of God and religion’.<sup>59</sup>

Most of the information collected by Rogerius is accurate and reliable, and gives a strikingly vivid picture of South Indian Hinduism as it was more than three centuries ago. Only in chapter 5 ‘on the privileges or prerogatives which the Vedam (*sic*) confers on the Brāhmans’ does his information go astray. The reason for this may be, not that Padmanābhan had any desire to deceive his friend, but simply that at that epoch in South India not even a Brāhman would have reliable information about the fountain head of his faith. Rogerius learned at least the names of the four *Vedas*, in the form *Roggawedam*, *Issourewedam*, *Samawedam* and *Adderawanawedam*. But what he was told about the content of these great works was strangely far from the truth:

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The first treats of the first cause, of the first matter, of the angels, of souls, of the reward of the good and the punishment of the bad, of the generation of creatures, and their corruption, what are sins, those that may be forgiven, who may do it, and wherefor. The second treats of the Regents to whom they ascribe power over all things. The third part is entirely moral, which exhorts to virtue and obliges to the hatred of the contrary. The fourth part treats of the ceremonies of the temple, of offerings and of festivals; but this fourth part cannot be any longer found, as it had long been lost.<sup>60</sup>

Not the least valuable part of the work was a paraphrase<sup>61</sup> of the first two 'centuries' of Bhartṛhari, a writer probably of the sixth century. This is described by Rogerius as dealing with the 'way to heaven'. Bhartṛhari is a writer of some eminence, but his writing cannot be reckoned as among the chief of Hindu classics. The significance of the publication of the document by Rogerius is that it seems to be the first translation of a Hindu work in Sanskrit to be made available in print to readers in the West.

Rogerius was a true pioneer; his work fully deserves the commendations of many scholars, and the pilfering to which it was subjected by many of those who came after. Caland remarks that his book

gives an arresting and objective description of Indian religion, free in the main from the troublesome and fanatical criticisms by which the work of many other theologians has been characterized . . . It must have been of great value to the missions in his day, since acquaintance with the religious ideas of those whom one wishes to convert to Christianity is the best means to approach them with a view to their instruction.<sup>62</sup>

Philip Baelde, better known under the Latinised form of his name Baldaeus, was born in Delft in 1632. He completed his theological studies in 1654, was accepted for service in India, and reached Batavia on 24 June 1655 before the completion of his twenty-third year. In 1666 he was back in the Netherlands, and died in 1671. The greater part of the time of Baldaeus in the East was spent in Ceylon; but he was in India in 1658, when he was present at the siege of Tuticorin, in 1660–2 in Negapatam, and perhaps also in 1664, and therefore he is entitled to a place in these pages. The fame of Baldaeus rests on one large work, compiled out of several smaller ones, and published, posthumously, in 1672 under the lengthy title, *A True and Exact Description of the most celebrated East Indian Coasts of Malabar and Coromandel; and also of the Isle of Ceylon. Also a most circumstantial and complete account of the idolatry of the Pagans in the East Indies . . . taken partly from their own Vedam, or law-book, and authentick manuscripts, and partly from frequent conversations with their priests and divines.*<sup>63</sup>

The first part of the work deals with the coasts of Malabar and Coromandel. Baldaeus is a garrulous author. The style is discursive, and the

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work lacks co-ordination and arrangement. But he is a good observer, and for those parts of the Dutch campaigns in India at which he was himself present his work is reckoned a primary authority.

Thus he was with the Dutch fleet at the capture of Cranganore, which took place on Sunday, 15 January 1662. On this he comments: 'During this siege we found the nights very cold, though the days were almost insupportable by the excessive heat. And after the conquest thereof, being ordered to preach the thanksgiving sermon in one of the parish churches, of which there were seven, I pitched upon a text in Deuteronomy xxiii, 14.'<sup>64</sup>

Of the siege of Cochin he has interesting things to say. When it was clear, in November 1662, that the capture of the city could not be long delayed, generous terms were offered to the Portuguese – 'that they should be left in full possession of their churches (except one), provided they would receive a Dutch garrison'. The final capitulation, 8 January 1663, stipulated that the

Franciscans [are] to enjoy the free exercise of their religion under the protection of the State. The clergy to have full liberty to carry away all their images, church ornaments, relicks etc. and what else belonged to them . . . Such of the inhabitants as were willing to stay behind under the jurisdiction of the *Dutch* Company to have free liberty to remain in their full possessions . . . and that care should be taken of the sick and wounded.<sup>65</sup>

The desire of the Dutch to extirpate the popish religion was not carried to extreme lengths.

We have noted elsewhere the unsuccessful attempts of Baldaeus to seduce Roman Catholic Christians from their faith and to induce them to accept the Reformed religion: 'My endeavours proved ineffectual by reason of the great number of popish priests yet remaining in that country, and the people being blind zealots in their religion.'<sup>66</sup> He had pleasanter recollections of Negapatam (Nāgapaṭṭinam), later the centre of Dutch power on the Coromandel Coast, which had been captured in 1658. Here he preached for the first time, both in Dutch and in Portuguese, on 18 July 1660, 'and administered the holy sacrament to twenty persons, and baptism to several children'. After he had spent some time settling the reformation in Negapatam, the work was handed over to John Kruyf who had formerly been in Indonesia, and, after his death, to Nathaniel der Pape, 'who in a very short time has made considerable advancement in the Portuguese and Malabar languages and . . . has settled the spread of the Gospel in the circumjacent villages'.<sup>67</sup>

The fourth part of the large work is the *Idolatriy of the East Indian Pagans*, on which the fame of Baldaeus principally rests.

By far the larger part of this section is given up to an exposition of Purāṇic tales, including the ten incarnations of Viṣṇu, and the many legends

attached especially to the stories of Rāma and Kṛṣṇa. Only in chapter 12 do we come to theology in the proper sense of the term – to creation, the nature of the soul and transmigration; and to religious practices – the use of sacred ashes, fasting, marriage, and customs relating to death and burial.

Though Baldaeus seems at certain points to have been acquainted with the work of Abraham Rogerius, the *Idolatry* is much inferior to the *Open Door*. Furthermore, it is the sad fact that Baldaeus was a fraud. His modern editor Dr A.J. de Jong expresses the opinion that in the seventeenth century writers were not as careful to acknowledge their indebtedness to others as they are today, and that, in studying Baldaeus, we have to ‘reckon with the possibility that here and there he puts forward as his own work what he had in fact borrowed from others’.<sup>68</sup> This careful editor had no idea of the enormities that Baldaeus had in fact committed. On p. 56, Baldaeus remarks innocently that ‘I think that I have read in a manuscript of a Roman Catholic priest, who was engaged in conversation about these things with a near relative of the Zamorin of Calicut’. When Professor Jarl Charpentier of the university of Uppsala was working a number of years ago on the *Livro de Seitas dos Indias Orientais* of Fr Jacob Fenicio SJ, which he had discovered in the British Museum, he noted the similarities between certain parts of the *Livro* and a number of passages in the *Afgoderye* of Baldaeus. Detailed comparison shewed that pp. 3 to 82 in the text as printed by de Jong are nothing but a translation of books I to III of Fenicio, and that pp. 185 to 300 are a fairly faithful translation of book VIII, chapters 1 to 11.<sup>69</sup>

It seems that during his stay in India Baldaeus had in his hands the complete text of the *Livro*, and made his translation from it. This is then reproduced in the *Afgoderye* with only this extremely vague form of acknowledgment.<sup>70</sup>

Worse is to follow. A study of the Dutch manuscript Sloane 3290 in the British Museum, containing an account of the ten incarnations of Viṣṇu written to accompany ten Indian drawings of the incarnations, reveals that practically everything in Baldaeus’ account of the same (pp. 57 to 179 in de Jong’s edition) has been lifted with the minimum of editing from the anonymous manuscript.<sup>71</sup> It seems that the original manuscript was written in Surat somewhere about the middle of the seventeenth century. Baldaeus must have become acquainted with it at some time during his stay in India, and copied extensively from it. In this case, he makes no allusion whatever to the source of his information.<sup>72</sup>

Too harsh a judgement should not be passed on Baldaeus. To maintain an old clothes’ shop is not a criminal offence. Criminal deception comes in only when second-hand clothes are passed off as new. Of this Baldaeus must be judged guilty. The opinion of Charpentier that ‘the work of Baldaeus on Hindu mythology lacks every ounce of value as a historical source’ is not too

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severe.<sup>73</sup> But, even though Baldaeus has no claim to be regarded as an independent investigator, he may demand some recognition as a populariser. He made available, in lucid Dutch, information which up to his time had been hidden in manuscript form.<sup>74</sup> And he rescued from archaic and obscure Portuguese the work of Fr Fenicio, which did not appear in print until 1933.<sup>75</sup> His work was widely used, having been translated into both German and English, and was highly regarded. He may be granted a measure of esteem, if not for the extension, at least for the diffusion, of knowledge about the religions of India.<sup>76</sup>

Mention has been made more than once of the *Hortus Indicus Malabaricus* of Henry Adrian van Rheede and Drakensteyn, the Dutch governor of the Malabar region, who arrived in India in 1669, and early on in his career formed the plan which over the years developed into the twelve stately and beautiful volumes of the great botanical work. We have a vivid description of the plan of action developed by van Rheede – how he would send out searchers in groups of two and three into the woods and jungles, and how he had arranged that specimens should be immediately drawn and painted before they had had time to wither. One of his useful collaborators was the discalced Carmelite Matthew of St Joseph. Matthew was an ardent collector, but he lacked both the knowledge and the aptitude required for the scientific classification and description of the trees and plants brought under investigation. Van Rheede was fortunate in securing the co-operation of John Cassearius, the chaplain of Cochin, who, though he was unwilling because of his lack of botanical training to engage himself in such an enterprise, was at length persuaded to lend his talents and rendered service of the utmost value. Matthew, recognising his own limitations, was willing to hand over the results of his investigations to John. John then drew up the plan for the whole work, and rendered into elegant Latin the information collected in Malayalam, Dutch and Portuguese, up to the conclusion of the second volume of the series. The first volume was not published, in Amsterdam, till 1678. Before that date John Cassearius had died in Batavia. His death was a grave loss to the whole enterprise, but it was not allowed to bring it to an end. The series was gradually carried to its conclusion, and stands as one of the greatest monuments of early European scientific investigation in India.<sup>77</sup>

It is evident that the Dutch contribution to the life of India was not inconsiderable; but that contribution was made more in the area of scientific knowledge of India and its religions than in any great progress towards evangelisation. Yet it is to be noted that all who have specially engaged our attention were members of the clerical profession. Their primary concern was with the vocation that had brought them to India, but they were not

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unaware of the wider realms of knowledge that were opened before them by a sojourn in the East. Other things passed away; their achievements remain. With the British occupation of the whole of India, the Dutch gradually withdrew, and very little remains to bear witness to their period, almost two centuries long, of control in some areas of India. There is one church in Negapatam; another church impressive in its simplicity in Tuticorin;<sup>78</sup> a few old houses in Cochin; a church and some other memorials at Chinsurah in Bengal, a settlement which the Dutch did not surrender to the British until 1825, when it was exchanged for a number of British possessions in Sumatra. All these are somewhat pathetic memorials of past greatness. As far as the life of the church is concerned, all the Dutch congregations in India seem to have been absorbed into the local churches.

#### 4 OTHER CHRISTIAN COMMUNITIES

We have reason to think it likely that there were Christians both in the north-western provinces, and also in the south-west, of India from a very early date. These naturally professed Eastern forms of the Christian faith. The majority of them made their permanent home in India, and through many generations of residence became almost completely assimilated to their Indian surroundings, except in the matter of religion. We have also to recognise the presence in various parts of India of Christian immigrants, who resisted assimilation and maintained both their traditional way of life and their Christian faith over long periods. The community which has been most widely represented, and has perhaps been most successful in retaining its national and Christian characteristics, is that of the Armenians. The Armenians are by any account an astonishing people. Centuries of persecution have reduced their numbers but have not broken their spirit. Many of them, having outstanding gifts as traders and merchants, have become exceedingly wealthy in the lands of their voluntary or involuntary exile.<sup>79</sup>

In pre-Mughul days most of the Armenians in India were travelling merchants, who having done their business returned each year to their own country, as the merchants from beyond the passes still do. The first who encouraged them to settle and to make India their permanent home seems to have been the great Akbar. He promised that he would not interfere with their religion, and that they would be given permission to build a church in Agra in order to be able to worship God in their own way. In response to this invitation many Armenians came to the capital, where their first church was built in 1582.<sup>80</sup>

There is a tradition that Akbar carried his liking for Armenians to the point of taking to himself an Armenian Christian wife, Mariam Zamāni

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Begum. Theoretically there is no reason why this should not be true – Akbar set no limit to the number of his wives and was catholic in his choice. All that can be said is that there is no conclusive evidence, and that there is a parallel tradition which credits Akbar with having had a Portuguese Christian wife.<sup>81</sup>

Much more reliable is the report that one Iskander won the favour of the emperor. His wife Juliana, a Christian and probably an Armenian, bore him two sons, Mirzā Zū'lqarnain (1592), and Mirzā Sikander (1595).<sup>82</sup> These two boys were constantly about the court and Akbar showed them many marks of favour. This was for a time interrupted, when Jahāngīr after his accession in 1606 adopted a strongly Muslim attitude. It is almost certain that Zū'lqarnain was the elder of the two boys forcibly circumcised by order of the emperor, as has been recorded in another place.<sup>83</sup> But the capricious favour of the emperor soon returned to the family. After the death of Iskander, Zū'lqarnain was appointed to the *jāgīr* of Sāmbhar, with responsibility for the collection of the salt revenues. This profitable employment formed the basis of a considerable fortune, which in spite of the ups and downs of imperial favour steadily increased through the years, so that at his death in 1656 the grandee was a very wealthy man.

Whatever may have been the religion of his ancestors,<sup>84</sup> Zū'lqarnain at an early age embraced the Roman Catholic form of the Christian faith, as his father may have done before him. For half a century his relationships with the Jesuits of his time were intimate and affectionate. He always had one or two Fathers attendant on him, and for years they regarded his home at Sāmbhar as a safe and pleasant retreat from the more arduous duties of Agra or Delhi. There are many references in the Jesuit letters to his systematic and ordered life, and to the depth and sincerity of his devotion.<sup>85</sup>

There are many stories of the generosity of the Mirzā to individuals of all classes who were in need. But what raised him for ever high in the estimation of the Jesuits was his gift of enough money to make possible the foundation of the Jesuit college in Agra. The sum of Rs. 20,000 was made available to the Jesuits; raising an additional Rs. 7,000, they were able to purchase two villages, one on the island of Bombay and another on the peninsula of Salsette. The revenues from these villages, a considerable sum, went to the maintenance of the mission to Mogor, thus delivering the Jesuits from dependence on the always uncertain favour of the emperors. The generosity of the Mirzā was acknowledged by his being officially enrolled, about 1625, as the founder of the *Collegium inchoatum* of Agra.<sup>86</sup>

The career of Mirzā Zū'lqarnain is of great importance as showing that it was possible for a Christian to resist all attempts to turn him into a Muslim, and yet to attain to a position of high, though insecure, eminence in the realm of Mogor. No doubt the comparative ease and security in which the

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Jesuits were able to carry on their work owed something to his influence and to the favour which he showed towards them. Fr Antony Botelho, who served in the mission from 1648 to 1654, notes that 'the Armenian merchants, who were fifty or sixty in my time, were much surprised at the freedom we had at the great Mogul's court'. It was a privilege not enjoyed by the other Religious settled in Constantinople, where the Turks molested them in a thousand ways, going so far at times as to beat them severely.<sup>87</sup>

A number of inscriptions in Armenian and Persian give evidence of the continued existence of the Armenian community in India. The oldest is in what has come to be known as Martyrose's chapel at Agra, a mausoleum erected on the tomb of a wealthy merchant of that name, which appears to be the oldest Christian building still standing in that part of India. The Armenian inscription reads: 'In this tomb rested the pilgrim Martyrose, son of Pheerbashee of Julfa. Died at the city of Agra, and gave his goods to God for the good of his soul, in the year 1060 of the Armenian era [AD 1611].' The Persian is as follows: 'Here lies interred the Armenian Khwāja Martinus (*sic*), the pilgrim, who called himself the slave of Christ; as he was of a charitable disposition, he gave whatsoever he possessed in charity to the poor, out of respect for the Lord. One thousand six hundred and eleven from the birth of the Lord Jesus.'<sup>88</sup>

No less than seven Armenian priests are known to have worked in Agra during the lifetime of Zu'lqarnain and later, while the Jesuits also were at work in the same area:

- 1614 Asatoor
- 1616 Mekhithar
- 1630 Sookias
- 1656 Zacharia
- 1668 Johanness
- 1671 Bagdassar
- 1675 Arrathoon<sup>89</sup>

Clio is occasionally permitted to smile; perhaps one of the occasions is the gallant story of William Hawkins at the court of Jahāngīr. The English captain had in a remarkable way won the favour of the emperor, who desired to keep him in India, and offered him all accommodations, including a wife. This placed Hawkins in an embarrassing situation; he did not dare to refuse so generous an offer, but stated that as a Christian he could marry only a Christian girl, 'at which my speech I little thought a Christians daughter could bee found'. But the emperor was too clever for him; he found the daughter of an Armenian gentleman, Mubarique Sha [Mubārak Shāh], lately deceased; so 'I seeing shee was of so honest a Descent, having passed my word to the King, could not withstand my fortunes; wherefore I tooke



### *Other Christian Communities*

her . . . So ever after I lived content and without feare, she being willing to goe where I went and live as I lived.’<sup>90</sup>

The marriage was not of long duration. Hawkins died at sea on his return voyage. His widow went on to England, and is believed to have been the very first resident of India to have visited these shores. In the following year she married again; her second husband was Gabriel Towerson, one of the principal men at Amboina barbarously murdered by the Dutch on 27 February 1623.

Armenians followed trade wherever it went. They are found at Chinsurah, the Dutch settlement, where a church was completed in 1697. Armenians were resident in Madras at least as early as 1666. On 22 June of that year the Armenian merchants were informed of the exceptionally favourable terms granted to them by the East India Company; they were to be free to trade on the same terms as British subjects, and ‘wherever there were forty Armenians resident in a Company’s town, a temporary church was to be built for them, and ground granted to them for the erection of a permanent place of worship, the Company allowing £50 a year for seven years for the maintenance of a priest’.<sup>91</sup> No higher tribute could be paid to the value attached by the Company to this venerable, upright and reliable community.<sup>92</sup>

In 1707, when Aurungzib died, Christianity was still a very minor force in Indian affairs. But it had taken root in many parts of the country; it was beginning to take on the shape familiar in later years; and with Thomas Christians, Armenians, Portuguese and other Roman Catholics, Dutch, English and Danish Protestants, and such Indians as had adopted one or other of these various ways of practising the Christian faith, had begun to manifest that astonishing diversity which is increasingly the perplexity of the historian, as the story draws nearer to the contemporary scene.

# Appendices

## APPENDIX I THE COPPER-PLATES OF MALABAR

By far the best easily accessible account of the copper-plates is that to be found in L.W. Brown, *The Indian Christians of St Thomas* (1956, 1982<sup>2</sup>), pp. 74-5, 85-90. But reference should also be made to A. Matthias Mundadan, *Sixteenth Century Traditions of the Thomas Christians* (1970), pp. 130ff.

Four sets of plates come under consideration:

- (i) The Thomas of Cana Plates (also known as the Mar Jacob plates). These were seen by the Portuguese in the sixteenth century. Couto maintains that they were still in the Factory at Cochin in 1599, but that by 1603 they had disappeared (Ferrolí, *Jesuits*, vol. 1, p. 80). It is thought that they may have been moved to Portugal, but no trace of them has ever been discovered in that country. Gouvea refers to this disappearance and to the concern which it caused the Christians, not having writings with which to defend themselves before the infidel kings, who keep violating their privileges.<sup>1</sup>

A manuscript in the British Museum contains what is alleged to be a Portuguese translation of a version in Malayalam of the inscription on this plate, made with great difficulty by a learned Jew, from the original plate. This records that the king 'Cocurangon' called Thomas to him, as a mark of honour gave him his own name, and later built for him a church and houses. He also accorded to him a number of privileges –

seven kinds of musical instruments and all the honours, and to travel in a palanquin, and that at weddings, the women should whistle with the finger in the mouth as do the women of kings, and he conferred on him the duty and the privilege of spreading carpets on the ground and to use sandals and to erect a pandal and to ride on elephants. And besides this he granted five taxes to Thomas and his posterity and to his associates both men and women, and for all his relations and the followers of his faith, for ever and ever.

On this Bishop Brown remarks somewhat caustically that 'it is difficult to resist the conclusion that the Jew was as ingenious as the

### *The Copper-Plates of Malabar*

Brahman who translated the inscription on the stone cross, found in Mylapore by the Portuguese in the sixteenth century, and that he was as fortunate in knowing the local tradition before he started his work' (p. 87).

It is possible that the mystery about this plate is in reality no mystery at all. Fr Schurhammer has suggested that in reality it is identical with the Quilon plates to which we now come.

- (ii) The Quilon Plates. These consisted originally of six plates in two sets. The third plate of the first set is missing; the two surviving plates are preserved in the Syrian Christian Seminary in Tiruvalla. Of the second set the first plate is missing; the second and third are in the Old Seminary at Kottayam.

The plates were reproduced in *JRAS* in 1841, and photographically and very clearly in S.G. Pothan, *The Syrian Christians of Kerala* (New York, 1963), between p. 32 and p. 33. They were elucidated by E.W. West in 1870 (*JRAS* NS 4, pp. 79, 80). Further revisions in the translation have been made in subsequent years.

The last plate of the Kottayam set has the signature of witnesses in Pehlevi, Kufic and Hebrew (or rather Persian in Hebrew script). The Kufic signatures were deciphered by Professor F.C. Burkitt of Cambridge, the Pehlevi, not quite completely, by Sir Harold Bailey, also of the University of Cambridge. C.P.T. Winckworth, a linguistic expert, also of Cambridge, has given it as his opinion that what we have is not the original, but a copy cut by a craftsman who was ignorant of the languages concerned. Mingana, p. 76, adds the suggestion that these witnesses were in all probability not Indians, but immigrants from Persia or Arabia; but concedes that they may have been Indian Christians with Syriac Christian names. For transliterations, see Brown, pp. 87-9.

- (iii) The Iravi Korttan plate, preserved in the Old Seminary at Kottayam. As indicated in the text, the date of this plate is quite uncertain, nor can it be stated with any confidence that Ravi Korṣan was a Christian.

The translation of this inscription, as provided by V. Venkayya is as follows:

(Line 1) Hari! Prosperity! Adoration to the great Ganapati! On the day of (the nakshatra) Rôhîṇî, a Saturday after the expiration of the twenty-first (day) of the solar month Mina (of the year during which) Jupiter (was) in Makara, while the glorious Vira-Râghava-Chakravartin, – (of the race) that has been wielding the sceptre for several hundred-thousands of years in regular succession from the glorious king of kings, the glorious Vira-Kêrala-Chakravartin, – was ruling prosperously; –

*Appendices to Chapter 2*

- (l. 5) While (we were) pleased to reside in the great palace, we conferred the title of Manigrâmam on Iravikorttaṅ alias Sêramaṅ-lôka-pperuñ-jeṭṭi of Magôdaiyarpaṭṭinam.
- (l. 7) We (also) gave (him) (the right of) festive clothing, house pillars, the income that accrues, the export trade (?), monopoly of trade, (the right of) proclamation, forerunners, the five musical instruments, a conch, a lamp in day-time, a cloth spread (in front to walk on), a palanquin, the royal parasol, the Telegu (?) drum, a gateway with an ornamental arch, and monopoly of trade in the four quarters (*sêri*).
- (l. 11) We (also) gave the oil-mongers and the five (classes of) artisans as (his) slaves.
- (l. 12) We (also) gave, with a libation of water, – having (caused it to be) written on a copper-plate, – to Iravikorttaṅ, who is the lord of the city, the brokerage on (articles) that may be measured with the para, weighed by the balance or measured with the tape, that may be counted or weighed, and on all other (articles) that are intermediate, – including salt, sugar, musk (and) lamp oil, – and also the customs levied on these (articles) between the river mouth of Kodungûlûr and the gate (gôpura), – chiefly between the four temples (taḷi) and the village adjacent to (each) temple.
- (l. 17) We gave (this) as property to Sêramâṅ-lôka-pperuñ-jeṭṭi alias Iravikorttaṅ and to his children's children in due succession.
- (l. 19) (The witnesses) who know this (are):– We gave (it) with the knowledge of the villagers of Panriyûr and the villagers of Sôgiram. We gave (it) with the knowledge (of the authorities) of Vêṇâḍu and Oḍunâḍu. We gave (it) with the knowledge (of the authorities) of Eṛânâḍu and Valluvanâḍu. We gave (it) for the time that the moon and the sun shall exist.
- (l. 21) The hand-writing of Sêramâṅ-lôka-pperuñ-dattâṅ Nambi Saḍeyan, who wrote (this) copper-plate with the knowledge of these (witnesses).<sup>3</sup>
- (iv) The plate in possession of the Jews of Cochin, of which once again the date is uncertain.

Work on the plates is continuing. When the experts differ so much among themselves, it is temerarious for one who is not an expert to express an opinion. It seems, however, to this writer that a date earlier than the seventh century cannot be established for any of the plates; that a date between the beginning of the eighth century and the end of the ninth is probable; but that the possibility that the Iravi Korttan plate is considerably later cannot be excluded.

APPENDIX 2 THE LEARNED BRĀHMAN AND THE THOMAS CROSS

The story of the decipherment of the Pehlevi inscription on the Thomas Cross is a cautionary tale for all decipherers of strange documents in unknown languages.

*The Learned Brāhman and the Thomas Cross*

The Portuguese are an inquisitive folk, and were naturally anxious to know the meaning of the inscription on the Cross which had been discovered in 1547. No progress was made, until, in 1561, a learned Brāhman was brought in from far away (Kanara, Vijayanagar?), and claimed to be able to interpret the mysterious words. There are thirty-six signs in the inscription. The Brāhman maintained that each of these represented an idea, which could be expanded into a whole sentence; he produced as his rendering what turns out to be a poem in Tamil–Malayālam of twenty-eight lines.<sup>4</sup>

The Brāhman was more ingenious than helpful. He had never heard of Pehlevi, and, if he had heard of it, would not have known what it was. He guessed at the language, and guessed wrong. He adopted a false principle of interpretation – no Indian language is written in ideograms like those of the Chinese. His interpretation has the distinction of bearing no relation at any single point to what he set out to interpret. But, as no one else stepped into the breach, he held the field for nearly three centuries, and his imposture was not discovered. Clearly the Brāhman, perhaps a convert, had heard a good deal about the beliefs of the Portuguese, especially as these related to Thomas and Mylapore. Honour demanded that he should not confess himself defeated by the inscription. Courtesy demanded that he should produce an interpretation agreeable to those who presumably were paying him for his labours. At least he may be given the credit for willingness to oblige.

For centuries the Brāhman's rendering was known only through a somewhat garbled Portuguese version supplied by Diogo de Couto, who was in India from 1556 to 1580 and died in 1616, in his work *Da Asia*.<sup>5</sup> In this translation we read that one of the twelve servants of Jesus

came to a place called Majalle (Maiale), with a staff in his hand, and he took a great beam, which had come by sea, of which he made a church, whereat the whole people rejoiced. Then a number of kings and others of their own will took the law of Thomas as it was the law of truth, and he gave them the sign of the cross to worship. And he went up to the place of Antenodur, where a Bargmene (Brāhman) struck him with a lance, and he embraced this cross which was stained with his blood, and his disciples carried him to Majalle (Maiale), and buried him in his church with the lance in his body.

The most important phrase in this rigmarole is that which relates to the Brāhman who struck the apostle with a lance and killed him. Writer after writer has woven his story of the martyrdom from this slender evidence; and in almost all of them appears the malice of the Brāhman as the cause of the death of Thomas. But in all probability the Brāhman never existed even in

### Appendices to Chapter 3

the interpretation of the learned Brāhman; he seems to have crept in simply through the misinterpretation of two Tamil words.

Matters remained in this state, until in 1923 the learned Fr Hosten published a letter written from Cochin in 1579 by Fr Monserrate to the Jesuit general in Rome.<sup>6</sup> This letter is a most remarkable achievement. Monserrate gives a fairly accurate sketch of the Cross, a reproduction in Latin script of the Brāhman's effusion, and a translation of the same into Spanish. Although he did not know Tamil, with the help of friends who probably spoke Malayālam rather than Tamil, he succeeded in producing a transcript in which the least expert Tamil reader can recognise a number of words which are undoubtedly Tamil, and a translation which is nearer to the original than Couto's version.

A number of Indian scholars have worked on Monserrate's Tamil, have elucidated a number of problems, and have produced a plausible text, helped by the fact that the original appears to be a poem (not a very good poem) in the Agaval metre. A.S. Rāmanātha Ayyar, with great ingenuity, has printed a reconstruction in Latin script.<sup>7</sup> T.K. Joseph has printed what he believes to be the original poem in Tamil script.<sup>8</sup>

There are a number of differences in interpretation, but there is a fair measure of agreement. The main disagreement is that Mr Joseph keeps the Brāhman, whom Mr Rāmanātha Ayyar has entirely eliminated. I think the latter is right. The word 'Brāhman' does not occur in Monserrate's transcript. And the two Tamil words *anthaṇa* and *maraiyavar*,<sup>9</sup> which certainly at times are used of Brāhmans, are not necessarily so. They can be used in a much more general sense, and in fact the University Tamil Lexicon gives for both words the rendering 'sages'.

So the wicked Brāhman belongs only to mythology, or hardly even to that tenuous form of existence.

#### APPENDIX 3 INDIAN EMBASSIES TO ROMAN EMPERORS

That there was more contact than is generally supposed between India and the Roman empire in the early centuries of the Christian era is shewn by the number of embassies from Indian kings to Roman emperors to which reference is made in the Western sources.

There is a convenient but not entirely satisfactory discussion of the evidence in B.A. Saletore, *India's Diplomatic Relations with the West* (Bombay, 1958), pp. 210-67.

The following embassies seem to be fairly well established as having actually taken place:

*Indian Embassies to Roman Emperors*

(1) *To the Emperor Augustus (31 BC–AD 14)*

Probably received by him in the island of Samos in 20 BC. This is referred to by Strabo, Suetonius, Florus, Dio Cassius and Orosius (though Orosius gives Tarragona in Spain as the place where the embassy was received).

(2) *To the Emperor Tiberius (14–37)* no embassy is recorded.

(3) *To the Emperor Gaius (37–41)*

The authority is Pliny. But from what country? Perhaps from the Pāṇḍiyan king in South India (if Taprobane in this account is to be taken as a reference to the river Tāmraparṇi in South India).

(4) *To the Emperor Trajan (98–117)*

The authority is Dio Cassius. Perhaps in the year AD 107, and perhaps sent by the king Kadphises II.

(5) *To the Emperor Hadrian (117–38)*

The authority is Pliny. Probable date is between 128 and 133; the king is almost certainly the great Kaniṣka, the third in the line of Kuṣāṇa kings. (The date of Kaniṣka is still a matter of dispute among the experts.)

(6) *To the Emperor Elagabalus (218–22)*

The authority is Stobaeus; but no clear indication is given as to the king who sent the embassy.

(7) *To the Emperor Aurelian (270–5)*

In connection with the triumph of Aurelian in 274, it is stated that he received many embassies from, among others, Bactrians, Indians and China; but no details are given, and the king who sent the embassy cannot be identified. The triumph is vividly described by Gibbon in chapter 11 of his *Decline and Fall*.

### Appendices to Chapter 3

(8) *To the Emperor Constantine (311–37)*

The authority is Eusebius, a contemporary. He asserts that ‘ambassadors from the Indians of the East brought presents’, probably in 336. Gibbon mentions this in chapter 18 of his *Decline and Fall*.

(9) *To the Emperor Julian (the apostate) (361–3)*

The authority is Ammianus Marcellinus, always well informed and generally accurate. The year is 361; the embassy is from the Indian nations as far as from the Divi (Maldives) and the Serendivi (Sinhaldvīpa = Ceylon).

A further reference in Sextus Aurelius Victor.

(10) *To the Emperor Justinian (527–65)*

The authority is John Malalas. The year 530. ‘At the same time an ambassador of the Indians was sent to Constantinople.’ By what king it is impossible to determine.

These fragmentary notices are enough to make it clear that contact between East and West was not unknown. The references are mostly incidental, and disappointingly vague; but it is to be remembered that there may have been many other embassies which are not mentioned in the surviving sources; for some reigns we do not have adequate historical materials.

#### APPENDIX 4 THE RISE OF MAHĀYĀNA BUDDHISM IN SOUTH INDIA

In the early centuries of the Christian era Buddhism in South India was much more than an alien importation, or a merely popular religion. It was in this area, apparently, that the great system of Buddhist philosophy commonly called the *Mahāyāna*, the great vessel, was beginning to take shape; and the more popular form of *Mahāyāna* may also have had its origins in the same area.

It is generally agreed that Nāgārjuna, the most eminent in the race of philosophers of the *Mahāyāna*, lived in the Āndhra area of South India.<sup>10</sup> He is the philosopher of total nothingness, of *śūnyatā* the void, to which in the end all essences and substances are to be reduced. Some scholars hold that beyond the void, the nothingness, of Nāgārjuna, a very important something is to be found: ‘It seems to me clear that the reality after which



### *The Dates of the Tamil 'bhakti'-poets*

Nāgārjuna is striving is a reality of mystical character, and that all his subtle reasonings have one aim and one only – to demonstrate the impossibility of attaining to that reality by the path of abstract reasoning.<sup>11</sup>

Buddhism in its other *Mahāyāna* form was opening itself to the aspect of a vast mythology of Buddhas and gods and demons, perhaps with the aim of winning back the allegiance of the common people, to whom the austere doctrine of the *Theravāda* was proving unattractive.<sup>12</sup> If this was the aim, the effort proved itself counter-productive. If the Dravidian mind wanted colour and mythology, it could find it nearer home, in the ancient traditions of the Dravidian world enriched by the more popular aspects of revived Hinduism. It was this Hinduism which in course of time prevailed.

#### APPENDIX 5 THE DATES OF THE TAMIL 'BHAKTI'-POETS

The chronology of early South India is notoriously difficult to determine. Clearly fixed dates are few, and the process of working backward and forward from those which there are is bound to leave many uncertainties.

One of the dates which can be relied on as having been fixed on the basis of good historical evidence is the battle of Vādāpi or Bādāmi in AD 642. The Chālukya kings had made Bādāmi a great centre of their rule. The most powerful of their kings, Pulakēśin II, had had a victorious career; but this came to an end when, in revenge for an attack on the Pallavas, he was in turn attacked and defeated by the Pallava king Narasiṃha-Varman I.<sup>13</sup>

This king has been brought to life by an inscription discovered at Tirukkalukunram, a village half way between Chingleput and Sadras, and elucidated by V. Venkayya;<sup>14</sup> in this inscription he is referred to as *Vātāpi koṇḍa Narasingapottaraiyar*, which seems clearly to be a Tamil form of 'Narasimhavarman, the one who has taken Vātāpi.'

Sēkkilar's *Periyapurāṇam* is the great hagiography of the Tamil Śaivite *Bhakti* movement. The biographies of sixty-three prominent Śaivite devotees are given. One of these is Ciruttoṇḍanāyanār, 'the little devotee', who in his biography is referred to as having been originally a soldier, and as having 'reduced to dust the ancient city of Vātāpi (Vādāvi)'.<sup>15</sup> There can be little doubt that the reference here is to the battle which took place in AD 642.

Further, the *Periyapurāṇam* tells us that Ciruttoṇḍar was visited in his own village by Tiruḡṇānacambandar,<sup>16</sup> who also refers to Ciruttoṇḍar in one of his hymns:

Senkāṭṭankuḍi is his holy fane,  
And there his 'Little Servant' dwells who now  
And ever doth before Lord Śiva bow.<sup>17</sup>

### *Appendices to Chapter 4*

In another verse printed by Kingsbury and Phillips there is a slighting reference to the opponents of the Śaivites:

Those Buddhists and mad Jains may slander speak,  
Such speech befits the wand'ers from the way.<sup>18</sup>

In yet another verse, there is a reference to the queen with whose help Cambandar was able to convert the Coḷa king to the true Śaivite faith. The name of the king is given in the Śaivite sources as Kūn Pāṇḍiyan; it is probable that he is the same as the Neḍumāran referred to in the text.<sup>19</sup>

Cumulatively these references suggest a date in the seventh century for some among the leading Śaivite saints. K.R. Srinivas Iyengār, in *History and Culture*, 3, p. 328, accepts this dating: 'The dates arrived at by Mr C.V. Narayana Ayyar seem to be on the whole satisfactory: Appar (AD 600–681); Sambandar (644–660); Māṇikkavāchakar (AD 660–692), and Sundarar who "must have lived for 18 years at any time between AD 710 and 753".<sup>20</sup> It is to be noted that I myself would place Māṇikkavāchakar considerably later than the date suggested here.

Mr Srinivas Iyengār, rejecting a very early dating of the Āḷvārs, the Vaiṣṇavite singers, concludes that 'we have to be satisfied with the broad inference that the Āḷvārs in all probability flourished in the period marked by the extreme limits of AD 500 and 850, and that it is not unlikely that some of the greatest Śaiva Nāyanārs and Vaiṣṇava Āḷvārs were actually contemporaries.'<sup>21</sup> Noting that the Āḷvārs belonged to a wide range of communities, he adds the interesting comment that 'All this illustrates the noble catholicity of the Tamils of a bygone age.'

### APPENDIX 6 THE TRAVELS OF LUDOVICO DI VARTHEMA

Ludovico di Varthema (or Barthéma) carried out his immense journey by the land-route to India and countries beyond in the years 1503–1508. His work, therefore, took place after the opening of the sea-route to India, and an account of it is for this reason given in an Appendix and not in the text.

Varthema was an excellent observer, and there is no reason to doubt the veracity of what he writes; indeed the naiveté of his account of various events and activities gives strong reason to believe that he is recording and not inventing.

Varthema arrived in India from Ormuz. Most of the places that he visited are on the coast, and he seems rarely to have penetrated far into the interior. He mentions, among other cities, Cambay, Goa, Honavar, Cannanore, Vijayanagar, Calicut, Coromandel 'where the body of Thomas is buried'; then to Ceylon and on to the Indonesian archipelago, back to India, and so via Ethiopia, Moçambique and the Cape of Good Hope to Europe.

## *Nikitin in India*

Varthema met Thomas Christians in the neighbourhood of Quilon, but has little to say of them. He does, however, give the important piece of information that 'every three years a priest comes there to baptize them, and . . . he comes from Babylon'.

Varthema's work is important in itself, but also because of the immense popularity which it attained; for many years it was for Europe one of the main sources of information about India and the countries beyond. It first appeared in Italian in 1510, under the title *Itinerario de Lodovico de Barthema Bolognese nello Egipto . . . La fede, el vivere & costumi de tutte le prefate Provincie . . .* The work was almost immediately translated into Latin (Milan, 1511). It was included by Simon Grynaeus in his *Novus Orbis regionum ac insularum veteribus incognitarum* (Basel, 1532), from which it was translated into German and printed in Strassbourg in 1534. A Spanish translation appeared in 1520 (Seville, several times reprinted). The *Novus Orbis* was translated into Dutch, and appeared in that language at Antwerp in 1563.

Varthema was also included by Ramusio in his *Primo Volume delle Navigazioni e Viaggi, nel qual si contiene la descrizione dell' Africa* (Venice, 1550; the Latin text is here corrected from the Spanish translation.) Finally in 1577 Richard Eden produced a work called *The History of Travayles in the West and East Indies*, in which he claimed to have included the 'Navigation and Voyages of Lewes Vertomannus, Gentleman'; but this version was found to be highly inaccurate and unreliable.

This constant reproduction of the work of Varthema in so many editions and in so many languages is good evidence for the interest felt in Europe at that time in the far places of the earth, and for the desire of Western Christians to know about them. One element in this interest was without doubt concern for the Christianisation of these previously unknown peoples.

The many imperfections in Eden's edition led the Hakluyt Society to the conviction that a new and reliable edition must be prepared. This appeared in 1863. The translation was made by J.W. Jones, and an extensive introduction and notes were added by the Rev. G.P. Badger, at one time (1845) a chaplain in the presidency of Bombay. The details about Varthema and his work given above are drawn from this excellent edition.

### APPENDIX 7 NIKITIN IN INDIA

The Archpriest Sergei Hackel is lecturer in Russian Studies at the University of Sussex. His article 'Apostate or Pioneer? Nikitin and his Dialogue in India, 1469-1472'<sup>22</sup> is of exceptional value in as much as Hackel is acquainted with all the relevant literature in Russian, and is also familiar with modern movements in the direction of a better understanding

## Appendix to Chapter 5

as between the religions of the world. He quotes comments by Bishop Kenneth Cragg, who had read the article before publication.

E.F. Oaten, in his rather superficial work *European Travellers in India during the fifteenth, sixteenth and seventeenth centuries* (London, 1909), had stated categorically: 'From hints he lets drop, it seems clear that he was compelled temporarily to abandon the Christian faith, and confess Islam' (p. 47). Hackel is not prepared to admit this. He interprets as ironic the words, 'Now Christian brethren of Russia, whoever of you likes to go to the Indian country may leave his faith in Russia, confess Mahomet, and then proceed to the land of Hindustan' (p. 166).

Hackel maintains that Nikitin manifested an attitude of much more than ordinary tolerance towards non-Christian religions, untaught by others and having to work this out for himself in his solitude. But he was never betrayed into abandonment of the Christian faith. Hinduism was startling to him; yet he is able to describe some of what he saw without condemnation (pp. 165-6). In Islam he finds much that was akin to his own thoughts, and in Islamic insistence on monotheism he may at times have found support for his own threatened faith in God. Much in Muslim devotion he finds it possible to adopt and use. 'In general only a minority of his invocations are in Russian; the longer prayers, such as his concluding prayer (the most elaborate of all) are basically Arabic in language, and, more important, Muslim in provenance' (p. 168).

The greater part of one prayer is expressed in Turkic. But the variety of languages employed in his coda could be said to have a programmatic implication. Here he invokes God four times, and in as many tongues: *Ollo* (Arabic); *Khudo* (Persian); *Bog* (Russian); *Dan'gry* (Turkic) (p. 172).

Hackel's conclusion is kindly:

Afanasi Nikitin's 'abeyance of judgment' and his 'willingness to listen' were not merely the result of ignorance or curiosity. There is no need to postulate a leaning towards heresy, a tendency towards syncretism, or a conversion to Islam to explain them. Nikitin's genuine and untutored respect for the 'other' was the product and the presupposition of his pioneer dialogue . . . the dialogue had its foundation and its justification (p. 173).

Perhaps this goes too far in giving a twentieth-century interpretation to a fifteenth-century document. But it is an interesting approach to the fragmentary record of the first Russian Christian whom we know to have been in India.

## APPENDIX 8 CRUSADE AGAINST ISLAM

Instructions issued by the king of Portugal to the Viceroy D. Francisco de Almeida, dated 5 March 1505:

### *The Bull 'Inter Caetera'*

He is 'to seize and enslave all Muslim merchants at Sofala, but not to do any harm to the local Negroes'. He is to tell the latter that 'we have ordered the said Moors to be enslaved and all their property confiscated, because they are enemies of our holy catholic faith and we have continual war with them'.<sup>23</sup>

Professor Boxer comments: 'In other words, the Portuguese crusade against the Muslims of Morocco was to be continued against their co-religionists in the Indian Ocean, and this was the keynote of Portuguese policy in that region for the next hundred years.'

#### APPENDIX 9 THE POWERS OF THE KING OF PORTUGAL OVER THE MISSIONS IN INDIA UNDER THE 'PADROADO' AGREEMENT

An extreme view of the authority of the king of Portugal over the missions in India was set forth by a professor of the University of Salamanca, John Solorzano Pereira, *De Indiarum Jure* (Madrid, 1629<sup>1</sup>; Lyon, 1672<sup>2</sup>). The king is described as being 'as it were vicar of the Roman Pontiff in the ecclesiastical affairs of India' (Solorzano, vol. II, p. 512 n. 36). Even the right of the pope to confirm the election of a bishop is reduced to practically nothing (vol. II, p. 530 n. 51). If the pope were to appoint an apostolic nuncio to one of the *padroado* countries, this would constitute an infringement of the rights of the king (vol. II, pp. 726-7, nn. 42-4).

The Spanish government, which at that time controlled Portugal, adopted the work of Solorzano as a guide to its rights and responsibilities in India. Naturally Rome had no hesitation in placing on the Index that part of the work which dealt with ecclesiastical affairs (20 March 1642). (H. Reusch, *Der Index der verbotenen Bücher*, vol. II, p. 374.)

#### APPENDIX 10 BULL OF POPE ALEXANDER VI, 'INTER CAETERA' OF 28 JUNE 1493

The full Latin text of this lengthy bull is conveniently accessible in F.C. Danvers, *The Portuguese in India*, vol. II (1966<sup>2</sup>), pp. 481-6.

Throughout the bull the emphasis is on bringing the inhabitants of the islands and lands discovered, or yet to be discovered, to the knowledge of Christ, and through Christian faith to salvation. All necessary steps to this end are to be taken. The crucial passage reads:

Furthermore, we command you in the virtue of sacred obedience . . . to appoint to those lands and islands already mentioned, upright and god-fearing men, learned, skilful, and well-trained, to instruct the inhabitants and those dwelling in the lands already referred to in the Christian faith, and to instil into them good morals, giving all diligence to carry out those things to which we have already referred.

## Appendices to Chapter 6

### APPENDIX 11 THE AUTHORITY OF THE POPE

Questions could be raised as to the authority by which the pope could convey to the king of Portugal such rights of conquest over large parts of the earth's surface, and ecclesiastical jurisdiction over lands not yet discovered. An attempt has been made to show, in connection with the bull of 1493, that the pope was taking advantage of the 'omni-insular' doctrine first put forth by Urban II in 1091, in the bulls *Casu universae insulae* and *Cum omnes insulae*, according to which all islands belong to the pope, and may be assigned by him to whom he wills at his good pleasure.<sup>24</sup> But the pope already knew in 1456 that Africa is not an island in any ordinary sense of the term. And, in any case, there was no need to look so far back in church history for authority and precedents. The canonists of the thirteenth century had worked out a doctrine of the universal sovereignty of the pope quite adequate to cover everything done by popes two centuries after their time. Innocent IV (*d.* 1259), a canonist of some distinction, had summed up the matter with admirable lucidity: 'We believe that the pope, who is the vicar of Christ, has power not only over Christians but also over all unbelievers, since Christ has power over all.'<sup>25</sup>

### APPENDIX 12 SPAIN AND PORTUGAL

The discovery of America by Columbus in 1492 added a new dimension to papal activities and a new set of problems. In the same year a new, and infamous, pope succeeded to the papal throne, Rodrigo Borgia, who took the name Alexander VI. Once seated on his throne Alexander lost no time in dividing up the world between Spain and Portugal by the famous bull *Inter Caetera* of 28 June 1493. The bull is addressed to the king of Spain, and the king of Portugal is not mentioned in it; but it is clear that the document is really addressed to both. The division between the two spheres is to be an imaginary line running a hundred leagues to the west and south of the Azores and Cape Verde Islands. At the same time, the pope renews the privileges of the two kings, and lays on them afresh the duty of evangelising and converting the newly discovered peoples.

Just a year later, by the Treaty of Tordesillas (14 June 1494), the two powers modified the decision of the pope by moving the line of division 270 leagues to the west. As a result of this change Brazil became part of the Portuguese colonial empire.

It has sometimes been maintained that there was a difference between the 'patronate' of Spain and that accorded to Portugal in that there is less emphasis in the Portuguese documents on the duty of evangelising the unbelievers. But a document such as the bull *Ineffabilis et Summi* of 1 June 1497 shows that the rights and duties of the two monarchs were in reality

### *The Nature of the 'Padroado'*

almost exactly the same. These were once again set forth by Paul III on 3 November 1534, in the bull *Aequum Reputamus*, by which the diocese of Goa was called into being.

The fullest statement of the rights and duties of the kings under the 'patronate' is to be found in the bull *Universalis Ecclesiae*, put forth at the request of Ferdinand of Castile;

By this Bull the pope practically handed over to the king of Spain the government of and responsibility for the Church in America (and later in the Philippines). In effect the king possessed all the powers which do not require the sacerdotal character . . . It is not too much to say that, by the rights conferred on him and the services that he is to render, he holds in his hands the entire life of the new church. (R. Ricard in Fliche et Martin, *Histoire de l'église*, vol. XIII, 'L'église et la renaissance', (1951), p. 125.)

#### APPENDIX 13 THE NATURE OF THE 'PADROADO'

Later generations were to argue endlessly as to the juridical status of the *padroado*. Was it a privilege or a right? The problem has been succinctly stated by A. da Silva Rêgo:

In the great polemic joined between the Propaganda in Rome and Portugal, two opinions regarding the definition of the *padroado* took shape with increasing rigidity:

The Portuguese *padroado* of the East is a privilege (Propaganda)

The Portuguese *padroado* of the East is a right (*ius*), as is clearly stated in bulls relating to it (Portugal).

The whole question turned on these definitions. If the *padroado* was a privilege, as the Propaganda maintained, the Holy See could at its pleasure modify it, or even go so far as to abolish it. If the *padroado* was a right, as Portugal maintained, the actions of the Holy See in attempting to interfere with this right were unjust, and Portugal was fully justified in resisting them.<sup>26</sup>

Men for the most part are not gifted with long sight into the future. In the sixteenth century the rapid success of the Portuguese in establishing their bridgeheads in the East and in defending them against all comers must have seemed a satisfactory guarantee of their permanence. The papacy, having skilfully divested itself of financial responsibility for these distant missions, may have felt too well pleased with its policy to desire any change. The problems of privilege and right had not raised their awkward heads above the horizon. With the decline of Portugal, the rise of the Protestant powers, and the diversification of Roman Catholic missions, the whole situation had to be reconsidered. It may be that in strict law Portugal had the better case; but all history, and not only the history of the church and the papacy, shows that in the end strict law has to yield place to practical necessity.

## Appendices to Chapter 7

### APPENDIX 14 THE JESUIT LETTERS AS HISTORICAL DOCUMENTS

The letters that have been preserved fall into four classes. Many are simply personal notes of friends to friends, and are often interesting because of the spontaneity and detail with which they are written. Some are meant for circulation within the society, and these too are often written without undue caution. Those addressed to superiors are generally more formal in style and cautious in statement, with the result that so high an authority as da Silva Rêgo expressed the judgement that 'the historical value of the General Letters is inferior to that of the personal ones'.<sup>27</sup> Finally, there are the letters edited for the consumption of the general public, and it is here that the trouble really starts. At times the missionaries themselves wrote for edification, stressing the supernatural and concealing the shadows. But the serious offenders were the editors in Europe:

There was often an over-emphasis on edification – edification not rightly understood. The supernatural was accentuated and the human relegated to the background, so that there is at times an atmosphere of unreality about the whole scene . . . Even the worthy Polanco, in many respects a very great benefactor of historical science, is not entirely blameless in this regard. He had his own way of 'improving' the letters from India . . . for the intended spiritual profit of his readers, but to the distress of the historian.<sup>28</sup>

Unfortunately it was in this unsuitable clothing that the doings of the Jesuits were made most widely known in the Western world. The best known series of all, the *Lettres Édifiantes et Curieuses* (1702–76) is one of the worst in this regard.<sup>29</sup> The letters are always curious and sometimes edifying, and were read with enthusiasm by a large public, especially in France. But as historical documents they have to be treated with the utmost caution.

The impeccable scholarship of the great twentieth-century publications is gradually bringing the Jesuits to life as they really were. The *Documenta Indica* of Fr J. Wicki SJ, of which fourteen volumes have so far appeared, is a magisterial work, giving evidence of unwearied and amazingly accurate scholarship. But so far this publication has reached only to the year 1588. For the seventeenth century our evidence is far less satisfactory.

### APPENDIX 15 THE LANGUAGE SPOKEN BY FRANCIS XAVIER

The evidence has been carefully collected by Fr G. Schurhammer in an article 'Die Muttersprache des Hl. Franz Xaver' (1929), republished in 'Xaveriana' (*Gesammelte Studien*, Bibl. Inst. Hist. S.I., Rome and Lisbon, 1964), pp. 339–52.

It might seem that the matter had been definitely settled by the letter which Xavier wrote early in 1544 from Cochin, in which he describes his



*The 'Commentarius' of Fr Anthony Monserrate*

first attempts to wrestle with the problems of an unknown Indian language. The most reliable text may be translated as follows:

As soon as I came to this [Coromandel] coast, I endeavoured to find out from them what knowledge they have of Christ our Lord . . . And as they did not understand me nor I them, since their native language is Malabaric<sup>30</sup> and mine is Basque,<sup>31</sup> I brought together those among them who seemed to be most intelligent, and such as understood both our language and their own;<sup>32</sup> we met together over many days, and translated with great labour the prayers.<sup>33</sup>

It would seem that nothing could be clearer. The trouble began with the Latin translation of the letters of Xavier by Tursellinus, published in 1596. For *Biscaine*, Basque, Tursellinus wrote *hispanice*, in Spanish. As far more people read Latin than read Portuguese, this error crept into almost everything written about Xavier in a variety of languages. The only existing translation of the letters of Xavier in English, that of Fr H. Coleridge (1872),<sup>34</sup> is based on the Latin of Tursellinus. The publication of *Monumenta Xaveriana* in 1900 and 1912 eliminated many errors and restored the true texts.

Antony, one version of whose testimony is given in the text, had spent seven years in the college of St Paul at Goa, and is reported to have been well versed in Latin, Spanish and Portuguese. Another version of his evidence reads: 'he held great conversations in a loud voice with our Lord in various languages which he knew'.<sup>35</sup> The Jesuit Visitor Valignano was in Macao in 1578, and there met Antony, now a very old man. From him he received detailed information as to the last days of the saint on the island of Sancian (Shang Ch'uan). There is no reason to doubt the general accuracy of the report. The unknown language in which Xavier spoke can hardly have been other than Basque.

APPENDIX 16 THE 'COMMENTARIUS' OF FR ANTONY  
MONSERRATE

The study of the first Jesuit mission to Akbar has been revolutionised by the discovery of the *Commentarius* of Fr Antony Monserrate SJ, one of the members of the mission. According to his own account, Monserrate obeyed strictly both the Jesuit rule that a careful record should be kept of all events, and in particular the charge laid upon him by Roderick Vincent, the Jesuit superior in Goa, that he should keep a record of everything that happened, both on the journey and during the residence of the Fathers at the court of the Great Mogul. 'I therefore set myself, full two and a half years, to write down every evening all the events of the past day.' Urged by a number of the brethren, he set to work to study his notes and to bring them together into a connected narrative. During the course of these labours he was captured by

## Appendices to Chapter 8

Muslims off the coast of Arabia, and carried first to Aimand, and then to Sana in what is now the Arab Yemeni republic. In each place he was treated by his captors with somewhat unusual kindness and allowed to carry on his literary labours. He was at last able, in December 1590, to complete his *Commentarius*. But he was fated to linger in captivity for another six years, until at last he was ransomed and returned to Goa, sixty years old and broken in health, carrying with him his precious manuscript. Four years later he died.

For some reason the *Commentarius* was never sent either to Lisbon or to Rome. It may have been used by some in India who wrote of the affairs of the Jesuits; but for almost three centuries its very existence was known to few people.<sup>36</sup> Then by a fortunate chance a copy was discovered in 1906 by Archdeacon W.K. Firminger in the library of St Paul's Cathedral in Calcutta. How it got there has never been clearly established, though it is known that at one time it was in the library of Fort William College. Its value was immediately recognised by all concerned with the study of the history of India. This is one of the very few contemporary accounts of the court and reign of Akbar as seen through Western eyes. Monserrate commends himself as a sober, thoughtful and accurate observer, especially of the emperor himself as seen by the Jesuit Fathers in various moods and situations.<sup>37</sup>

It is now possible to check Monserrate's narrative against original letters written by himself and others from Fathpur Sikri and other cities during the course of the mission, and recently published by J. Wicki (DI, 11 and 12), and by da Silva Rêgo (*Doc.*, vol. XII).

It is clear that, though Monserrate has naturally organised his material, and his style is somewhat affected by the fact that he is writing in Latin and not in Portuguese, he has followed closely his notes written at the time, and that the changes and adaptations are not such as to impugn his accuracy. Even the trivial details which he records help to carry the reader back to the atmosphere of India four centuries ago.

The Father is not always happy in his biblical references. He tells us (Hoyland, p. 45) that 'Claudius the centurion merited the mercy of God towards himself by such actions.' The reader who refers to Acts chapter 10 will find that the name of the centurion is more commonly given as Cornelius.

### APPENDIX 17 PROFESSOR SAMUEL LEE AND JEROME XAVIER

In the year 1824 the Rev. Samuel Lee, being at that time professor of Arabic in the university of Cambridge, decided to make available in English the account of the controversy between the Rev. Henry Martyn and Muslims in

### *Towards a Life of Alexis Menezes*

Shiraz in the year 1812. In his preface Lee gives an account of earlier controversies between Christians and Muslims. For this purpose he makes use of the *Fount of Life* of Jerome Xavier, of which he had found a copy in Persian in the library of Queens' College, Cambridge. He takes note, also, of a reply to Xavier written by a Persian nobleman, Aḥmed ibn Zain-al-'Ābidīn, and further refers to a Latin work by one Fr Guadagnoli of the college of the Propaganda in Rome, written in defence of Xavier and in refutation of Aḥmed.<sup>38</sup>

In thirty-four pages, which include considerable extracts in Persian, Lee gives a highly competent summary of the work of Xavier; this is the form in which that work first became available to the English-speaking world. The course of the argument can be clearly followed from Lee's account of it. He quotes, p. ix, the striking prayer with which the Preface concludes:

Give unto us, O Lord, the key of the knowledge of Thee. Grant to our understandings the power of comprehending thy greatness, that Thy Majesty and Grace may not be to us an occasion of stumbling, and hence we remain unblessed by Thy many favours. Let not that come upon us which happens to the bat, which is blinded by the light of the Sun, and which in the midst of light remains in darkness.<sup>39</sup>

The title of Lee's work is *Controversial Tracts on Christianity and Mohammedanism* (Cambridge, 1824). On p. xli he sums up his impressions of Xavier and his work:

It is very evident that the writer was a man of considerable ability and energy, and that he has spared no pains to recommend his religion to the Mohammedan or heathen reader; but that he has trusted much more to his own ingenuity than to the plain and unsophisticated declarations of the Holy Scriptures. His style is on the whole correct, though occasionally interspersed with Europeanisms, but it never makes the most distant approach to what may be called elegance.

Sir William Muir, the great Christian scholar to whom we owe the first modern and scientific life of Muhammad (1857-61) dealt at some length with the work of Lee in an article on 'The Mohammedan Controversy', published in the *Calcutta Review* in 1845 (reprinted Edinburgh, 1897), pp. 1-19. Muir agrees with Lee's judgement on Xavier, and speaks very highly of Lee's own contribution to the debate.

#### APPENDIX 18 TOWARDS A LIFE OF ALEXIS MENEZES

Carlo Alonso OSA: 'Documentación inedita para una biographia de Menezes', *Analecta Augustiniana*, 27/28 (1964-5), pp. 263-333.

This careful work is not as interesting as might have been hoped. Consisting as it does almost entirely of official documents, it does not reveal

## Appendices to Chapter 9

very much of the mind and character of Menezes.

But document 27, a letter of M. to Mgr F. Biondi, patriarch of Jerusalem, of 19 December 1597, shows that already at that date Menezes had a clear idea of what he intended to do on the visitation of the Serra, which he was convinced was essential but which he was not able to carry out until 1599. Among other things, he states that it is essential that a bishop of the Latin rite should be sent to the Serra. When such a bishop comes, one of his first tasks must be to extinguish the Syriac language; this is not their native language; their priests learn it just as our priests learn Latin, and this is the channel by which this heresy entire (Nestorianism) makes its way in here.

It is clear that as early as 1606 Menezes desired to be set free from his heavy task in India and to be allowed to return to Portugal.

In a report to the pope (Doc. 59 of 12 November 1611), on the work that he had carried out in India, he specifies as being of special importance his introduction of the Augustinian sisterhood into India, the restoration of order in his diocese, and the reduction of the Thomas Christians to the obedience of Rome.

### APPENDIX 19 ACTS OF THE SYNOD OF DIAMPER

The Acts of the Synod of Diamper were first printed in 1606 at Coimbra, in Portuguese, and are usually bound up with the *Jornada* of Antony Gouvea, printed in the same year also at Coimbra.

In 1745 J.F. Raulin published at Rome his *Historia Ecclesiae Malabaricae cum Diamperitana Synodo*; Raulin translated the Acts from Portuguese into Latin, added an abridgement of the *Jornada* of Gouvea, and provided also a brief history of the church in the Serra. This translation was printed in 1752 at Lucca by J.D. Mansi, in the Supplement to his Councils, and was reproduced photostatically in the new Mansi, *Nova et amplissima collectio* (Paris, 1902), vol. XXXI, coll. 1161-1368. A complete English translation was published by Michael Geddes, chancellor of Salisbury, together with a brief account of the doings of Menezes in the Serra, in his *History of the Church of Malabar* (London, 1694). Geddes' translation is reproduced in James Hough, *History of Christianity in India*, vol. II (London, 1839), pp. 515-683.

### APPENDIX 20 VALIGNANO'S REPORT

Valignano includes in his report descriptions of all the Jesuit stations from Ormuz to Japan. Of special interest are the notes on the churches in South Travancore and on the Fisher Coast. The former is the most discouraging of

*Valignano's Report*

all the areas. 'The people are extremely poor and backward, and disinclined to make any effort towards progress in the knowledge and practice of the faith. Moreover the Fathers have to carry a heavy burden, inasmuch as they are the civil as well as the spiritual rulers of the churches, and are judges in all kinds of cases and causes that arise.' When we pass to the Fisher Coast the situation is entirely different. These are the best churches in the whole of the non-Christian world, with real piety among both men and women. The Fathers should soon be able to hand over all the parishes to Indian labourers; they would then be able to assemble themselves at Punnaikāyal, where they would be able to conduct a seminary out of which there would grow an independent Indian clerisy.<sup>40</sup>

Valignano writes, pp. 286–8, of the difficulties which face the Jesuit on mission in Asia. The Fathers live isolated, sometimes entirely alone or only two together, and this makes very difficult the observance of the rule and the maintenance of the spiritual life. The effects of the climate on body and spirit are such that with even light labour the spirit is exhausted; then it becomes extremely difficult in prayer to maintain the necessary reverence and outward concentration, and it is a great deal more difficult to attain the interior concentration and attention; in consequence the communication and movement of the Spirit is very rare.

One section deals with the difficulty experienced by the Fathers in the work of converting the non-Christians. These are summed up under five heads:

The inhabitants have little moral or spiritual sense. They seem to be deprived of the natural light; they do not recognise their vices or regard them as such.

The faculty of reasoning is little developed in them, and they are moved not so much by reasoning as by purely human considerations.

Those who become Christians fall into contempt and ill-favour in the eyes of those by whom they were formerly honoured.

Workers are far too few, especially workers who have mastered the languages of the peoples; the Lord has not helped us with any miraculous gift of languages.

The bad custom has been established of giving to new Christians a robe as a sign of honour at their baptism. As the number of Christians increases, how will it be possible to clothe all these thousands of persons?

Next follows a section on the difficulty experienced in maintaining the converts in the Christian faith and instructing them (pp. 278–80):

The main difficulty is the lack of understanding among the converts and the persistence of the old superstitions in their minds. More can be

## Appendices to Chapter 10

expected of their sons and grandsons than of the present generation. The Fathers have great difficulty in communicating with the local people, and the catechists on whom they rely have little zeal and fervour for the work.

The people find it difficult to lift up their minds above earthly things, and show little concern to make their confession and receive the sacrament; many of them live and die without ever having made their confession. They live in close contact with 'an infinity of Hindus' and in some places with Muslims and Jews as well. If these are able at times to subvert even the Portuguese, how much more such new and feeble Christians?

Each Father may have charge of many churches, and may find it impossible to impart to the faithful more than a few things not well understood. It appears to be a great achievement to keep them even on the level to which they have attained.

The next section, pp. 284–9, deals with the necessity of providing seminaries in which the Jesuits can learn the languages of the local people. It is absolutely necessary that each seminary be in the area in which the language is spoken, since these languages are very difficult and have to be learnt by word of mouth; 'and, if the necessity and constant practice of speaking do not help them, they will never learn anything'.

So we come to the most important section of all – on the necessity of providing seminaries for the training of local and indigenous clergy (pp. 289–95). It is not to be expected that a Christian church without deep interior roots will be able to maintain itself for a long time. The only remedy is to train up a race of indigenous Christians as fast as we can. If it be objected that it is dangerous to ordain men who are still ignorant and subject to many temptations, we may point out that, in spite of many errors, the churches in Ethiopia and on the Malabar coast have managed to keep themselves in life, because they had priests of their own race. How much more will this be the case, if the new churches are under the jurisdiction of catholic bishops?

This bald summary of the work of the great Visitor may give some impression of the acuteness of observation, the broad vision of things, and the constructive intelligence which make of Alexander Valignano one of the great missionary thinkers of all times.

### APPENDIX 21 THE 'FLOS SANCTORUM' OF FR HENRIQUES

The *Flos Sanctorum* of Fr Henry Henriques, which was known to have existed but which was believed to have been entirely lost, was discovered in the Vatican library in 1954 by Fr Xavier S. Thani Nāyagam.

## *The Councils of Goa*

The book is introduced by a number of prefaces, and by a good deal of introductory matter in Tamil, including an explanation of a number of terms used by the Father which are either incorrect or not easily intelligible, and a list of technical terms, mostly transliterated from the Portuguese, which are used in the *Flos*.

The writer's own preface is printed in Spanish with an English translation, and the first page is photographically reproduced; the handwriting is small but beautifully neat and clear, and perfectly legible with a magnifying glass (pp. lxix–lxxvii).

Then follows the Tamil text of the work, of which an account has been given in the text of this volume.

For good measure we are given at the end, pp. 741–52, the calculations of Fr C.J. Beschi SJ on 'the Tamil years and months', being Appendix 3 to his Tamil–Latin Dictionary. This is the first time that this interesting text has been printed in the original Latin.

### APPENDIX 22 THE COUNCILS OF GOA

One of the decrees of the Council of Trent laid it down that in each area of the church provincial councils were to be held once in every three years.<sup>41</sup> In accordance with this decree five councils were held in Goa in the half century after the conclusion of the Council of Trent.

(1) The first provincial council was held in 1567, under the presidency of the first archbishop of Goa, Gaspar de Leão Pereira, and after his retirement under that of George Themudo OP, bishop of Cochin. The number and variety of the decrees give evidence of the minute care devoted to every aspect of the life of the church.<sup>42</sup> No less than 115 decrees were passed; a number of these were followed up by action on the part of the governor and passed into law. The council also had before it the Constitutions of the archbishopric of Goa; these as printed by da Silva Rêgo, *Documentação*, vol. x, form a considerable volume of 317 pages.

(2) The second provincial council was convened for the year 1571; but the death of the archbishop, George Themudo promoted from Cochin, on 29 April 1571, brought the plans to a standstill. The council was re-convened by Gaspar Pereira, who had emerged from retirement to take charge of the see for the second time. It met on 12 June 1575. The work of this council was insignificant. It passed only 33 decrees, none of them very important. This may be regarded as a tribute to the work of the first council, which had been so thorough that there was not very much for the second to do.<sup>43</sup>

(3) The third council, which met on 9 June 1585,<sup>44</sup> having been convened by Vincent Fonseca OP, archbishop of Goa, was much more important.

## Appendices to Chapter 10

Much time was spent on the affairs of the Thomas Christians, the archbishop of Ankamali, Mar Abraham, being present in person. Considerable attention was directed to the work of evangelisation, and to the care and edification of new converts. But what gave its special significance to this council was its concern for the development of the Indian priesthood, and the principles laid down to govern it.

The Decree, IV.1, which deals with the matter, deserves to be quoted in full:

As in these parts of India there is as yet no seminary whatever, and the need of a seminary being greater here than elsewhere because of the great scarcity of priests coming from Portugal, and because of the need of native priests for the conversion and instruction of the natives, the Synod ordains that in keeping with the dispositions of the said Council of Trent seminaries be established in all the dioceses. And, if it is not possible to do so in each diocese, let at least one common seminary for the whole province be erected in the city of Goa, for the instruction and education of the young men sent by each of the bishops, both sons of the Portuguese and sons of the natives fit (for ordination). As for the number of students to be brought up in that seminary, one half shall be from this archdiocese of Goa, and the other half from the suffragan dioceses. And since in this province there are no funds for the support of the seminaries, the Council requests the king to order the necessary amount to be assigned for the foundation of the said seminary or seminaries, providing them with the necessary income.<sup>45</sup>

This needs some explanation. A number of seminaries did already exist in India, but not one of these was a seminary in the sense intended by the Council of Trent. Each was controlled by a religious order which in many ways was independent of the local bishop. What the prelates wanted was to have seminaries directly and completely under their control, organised with the single aim of training secular priests for service in the parishes and admitting only candidates for the priesthood.

For a variety of reasons the good intentions of the council were not carried into effect. For nearly two centuries the training of priests was almost entirely in the hands of the religious orders; it seems that the first fully diocesan seminary was *Bom Pastor*, opened at Rachol on 4 January 1762.<sup>46</sup>

The prelates, though eager to promote the development of the indigenous ministry, had been led by the experiences of nearly a century to be somewhat cautious as to the means by which this was to be brought about. A further decree demands particular attention:

And because the apostle St Paul speaking of those newly converted to the faith says *non neophitum ne in superbiam elatus* etc [1 Timothy 3: 6: 'He must not be a recent convert, or he may be puffed up with conceit' RSV] . . . and because the experience of this province has shewn the need of such caution, the Council recommends to the prelates the following: not to admit to holy orders those who have been baptized as



## *The Councils of Goa*

adults unless fifteen years have elapsed since their conversion, nor to entrust them with the care of souls before they are thirty years old, at which age they may be ordained, in conformity with the old canons; let those alone be as a rule admitted who come from respectable castes and families, since these are held by the Christians in greater respect. They must be men of good life and good reputation, temperate, chaste and honest, and know well the local language of the country for which they are to be ordained, as well as Latin and cases of conscience, and let them be exercised in the ministry of the conversion of non-Christians and in the care of new Christians.<sup>47</sup>

(4) The fourth council was convened by archbishop Matthew de Medina, and met in the year 1592.

This council, like the second, was parenthetical, and did little except re-enact the decisions of former councils. But it did make one decision that was to have far-reaching consequences in the life of the church:

It was decided that candidates for the priesthood might be ordained on the title of benefice, i.e. for service in a church and parish specified before the ordination took place, or on the title of patrimony, i.e. on assurance that he had sufficient possessions to provide an income on which he could support himself. (The amount required is specified.)

This decree made possible the ordination of a number of young Goans for whom no work could be found, since the number of parishes available was unequal to their numbers.<sup>48</sup>

(5) The fifth and last council in the series was convened by Alexis de Menezes, and met in 1606. Guided by a man of such energy and thoroughness, the council carried out a complete survey of the work of the province and passed no less than 149 decrees.

Two are of sufficient importance to be recorded in some detail: The authorities had discovered that a number of candidates for ordination had made false declarations as to their qualifications under the title of patrimony, having received donations from wealthy friends on the understanding that the donation would be revoked after holy orders had been conferred. The council decreed that those who had received ordination on the basis of such a falsehood should be suspended, at the pleasure of the ordinary, from the exercise of the ministry. The faithful were ordered not to make such donations; if any such donation had been made, there would be no right of revocation; the donation would remain in force, to the loss of the one who had made it.<sup>49</sup>

Another decree dealt with the question of the use of local languages:

in order that churches may be maintained in such manner as is convenient for the good of souls, the instruction of the faithful and the better administration of the sacraments [this Synod] ordains and enjoins strictly that no priest, secular or

### Appendices to Chapter 11

regular, be promoted to the rectorship of any church with care of souls, unless he knows the language of his parishioners in which he will have to pass an examination. Those who are at present incumbents and do not know the native languages are granted a period of six months from the date of the publication of the present decrees, for the study of the same. And, if after that they do not show enough knowledge of the same, they shall be considered *ipso facto* suspended, and deprived of all jurisdiction over their parishioners.<sup>50</sup>

It is stated<sup>51</sup> that Menezes was the first archbishop of Goa to entrust parishes to the care of Indian priests. He removed the regulars of the Augustinian order to which he himself belonged, and replaced them by Brāhman priests. (But was Menezes quite such an innovator? It seems clear that Antony Vaz was priest in charge of the parish of Carambolim.) Later records show that the sound policy of Menezes was not maintained in honour. Half a century later (1653) Matthew de Castro, bishop of Chryso polis, was still making complaint that the parishes were for the most part in the hands of foreign priests who did not know the language, and that Brāhmans were excluded. (See chap. 14, pp. 335-40.)

With the fifth council, the series comes to an end. No further council was held till 1894. The problems it had to face were not the same as those faced by the Fathers in the early years of the seventeenth century.

#### APPENDIX 23 THE SIEGE AND CAPTURE OF HŪGLĪ

These events are unusually well documented. Frey Sebastian Manrique, in his *Itinerario de las Misiones del India Oriental* (Rome, 1649; Rome 1653<sup>2</sup>, Hakluyt Society's edition, *Travels of Fray Sebastien Manrique 1629-1643*, ed. C.E. Luard and H. Hosten SJ, 2 vols., Oxford, 1927), gives a great deal of information, especially in chaps. 77-81 (vol. II, pp. 299-333) and chap. 65 (vol. II, pp. 205-18).

The account given by Manrique has now been supplemented by the most valuable and contemporary account given by Fr John Cabral SJ who was present throughout the siege and escaped with his life. This, first translated from the Portuguese by Fr L. Besse SJ of the Mission of Madura and published in the *Catholic Herald* of Calcutta in 1918, has now been reproduced in its entirety in Luard and Hosten *Travels* (1927), vol. II, Appendix: 'The fall of Hūglī', pp. 391-422, followed by two further valuable notes.

There is a good account of the siege in J.J.A. Campos, *The Portuguese in Bengal* (Calcutta, 1919), pp. 128-40. An excellent summary is given in Maclagan, *Jesuits* (1932), pp. 99-106, and notes pp. 117-18.

The full title of this work is *The Life of the Icelander Jón Ólafsson, Traveller to India, Written by Himself and completed about 1661 AD with a Continuation by Another Hand, up to his death in 1679*. This work had never been printed in Icelandic, and first became widely known through the translation in Danish published by Sigfus Blondel in 1905/07. Blondel followed this up with the Icelandic *editio princeps* published in Copenhagen in 1908–9.

An English translation was made by Dame Bertha Phillpotts, Mistress of Girton College, Cambridge and a distinguished Scandinavian scholar. Vol. I was published in 1923 by the Hakluyt Society. Vol. II, which deals with Ólafsson's experiences in India, was edited by Sir R.C. Temple (*d.* 1931) and Miss L.A. Anstey and appeared in 1932. The translation, as before, was by Dame Bertha, who in 1931 had married the distinguished astrophysicist Hugh Frank Newall. She died in the following year, before her notable work had appeared from the press.

Ólafsson was nearly seventy when he wrote down his recollections. It is clear that he had not kept a diary, and naturally his memory is at fault in a number of contexts; but his account is extremely vivid, and, where it can be checked, is veracious and reliable.

Ólafsson was a gunner's mate. He volunteered for service in the East, at a time at which it was very difficult to get men to go to India. (King Christian IV had promised amnesty to all criminals, except murderers, adulterers and blasphemers, who undertook this service. Ólafsson, vol. I, p. 221 n. 5.) His ship left Copenhagen on 8 October 1622; he was back in Iceland, after many hardships, just about three years after he had set out. He was a man of considerable intelligence and a keen observer; he tells us in detail what life was really like in a European settlement of the seventeenth century.

He makes it clear that religion played a considerable part in the life of travellers in those days. Notable is his account of the care taken by the Danish authorities for the exact observances of the Christian faith, both on board ship and in the castle of Dansborg at Tranquebar. At a moment of great danger by sea, 'the minister, Master Matthias, lovingly and paternally exhorted us to repentance and contrition for all sins committed, and bade each and all of us set his hope in the precious merits and mediations of our Redeemer and Saviour the Lord Jesus Christ' (vol. II, p. 213). The crew sang the well known Lutheran hymns 'Mit Friede und Freude fahr ich dahin' and 'Wenn wir in höchsten Nöfhen sein'.

APPENDIX 25 THE 'PUBLICUM TESTIMONIUM . . . DE MODO  
INSTRUENDI NEOPHYTOS'

(Summary of answers given by high-caste converts in the hearing on 14 September 1610 and following days).

- (1) We call ourselves 'pupils of the *Aiyar* (teacher), because in these parts it is customary for pupils of a *Guru* so to style themselves. But our *Guru* did not order us to do so – quite the contrary; he said expressly that we are pupils and disciples of Jesus Christ alone, and for this reason we call ourselves also Christians. In any case we never regarded ourselves as *parangi*.
- (2) The inhabitants of Mathurai regard the *Aiyar* as a man of extraordinary erudition and impeccable conduct. He is here very highly esteemed.
- (3) The spiritual law (*Gñānavedam*), in which the *Aiyar* has instructed us, is here regarded as admirable. Some, who in any case are not competent to judge, call the *Aiyar* an unbeliever, because he rejects their idols, and does not share their ideas about the *Samsāra* (transmigration). In no way, not even by suggestion, has our *Aiyar* maintained that the religion taught by him is different from that of Fr Gonçalo Fernandes or of other Portuguese; on the contrary, our *Aiyar* has taught us exactly the same religion. That is what he himself says.
- (4) The difference between our *Aiyar* and Fr Gonçalo Fernandes does not concern their religion, or the ceremonies of that religion; but only the fact that they belong to different castes.
- (5) Our *Aiyar* has never forbidden us to attend the mass celebrated by Fr Gonçalo and his sermons, nor has he forbidden us to make our confession to that Father. He has never once threatened that, if we did so, he would exclude us from his 'Church of Jesus' as he calls it.
- (6) We are well aware that our *Aiyar* regularly goes to confession to Fr Gonçalo. In the absence of our *Aiyar* we would do the same.
- (7) We know that our *Aiyar* has changed some expressions in the Catechism which is in use on the Fisher Coast. But that has never in the least led us to the idea that for that reason our religion is different from that of Fr Gonçalo. We affirm, rather, that through these alterations in expression, some utterances of our *Aiyar* have become clearer and more intelligible to us. For example, for the holy Trinity we say *Pidā* (Father); *Sudan* (Son) and *Spiritu Santo* (Holy Spirit) – that means three persons in one God.
- (8) Our *Aiyar* has never ordered us to bathe, or to make marks on our bodies with sandal paste. We do not always bathe before going to mass; and, when we do so, this is simply a matter of physical cleanliness, without any superstitious ceremonies.
- (9) As far as we are aware, no Indian 'law' prescribes the use of sandal paste as a religious act. It is used only for adornment. We therefore in no way hold the opinion that this action has some pious merit. This sign is by no means exclusively associated with one sect. Our *Aiyar* himself uses it in his capacity as a 'teacher of the law'; none of us would wear the sign with this significance.

*The So-called 'Ezour-Vedam'*

- (10) Fathers need not of necessity belong to a higher social status. Nevertheless in our opinion it is unfavourable (to our religion) if they have contact with the lower castes. In our eyes their doing so would be no offence, and would constitute no difference from our religion. We say this because of the prescribed caste rules. For the last nine or ten months our *Aiyar* himself has given up the wearing of the sacred thread (*pūñūl*).
  - (11) Neither from our *Aiyar* nor from anyone else have we come to understand that the 'law' proclaimed by our *Aiyar* is necessarily different from that of the *parangis*. He has never said anything of the kind to us.
  - (12) Responsibility for all our difficulties with the Paravas does not rest with our *Aiyar*, through whom we have become Christians. The cause of them is to be found in the widespread opinion that we ourselves have become *parangis* because the *Aiyar* drinks wine at the mass, and in baptism touches us with saliva.
  - (13) The religious ceremonies which our *Aiyar* observes in the Church and outside it, differ from those of the Hindus.
  - (14) In this country the word *parangi* implies a feeble being on the very lowest social level. We shrink from such men. Our anxiety in relation to the *parangi* is somewhat less since we were baptized, since our *Aiyar* has explained to us that the *parangi* follow the same 'law' and serve God just as we do. For this reason we meet them with greater respect than we did in earlier days.
  - (15) We know who the pope is, and recognise him as the supreme head of the universal Church. The archbishop of the Serra (Cranganore) is our spiritual ruler. Some members of our congregation have received confirmation at his hands. Others desire to do so. When we were baptized we received neither money nor clothing. We became Christians in order to obtain salvation, and for no other reason.
- (The original is in the Jesuit archives in Rome: ARSI Goa 51, ff. 39-50, 51-62, 63-73).

APPENDIX 26 THE SO-CALLED 'EZOUR VEDAM'

This is an alleged translation of the *Yajurveda* which has been falsely ascribed to Nobili. Nobili seems indeed to have declared that he came to proclaim a new *Veda* (*Vedappustakam* is to this day the name under which the Christian Bible passes in the Tamil country). But it is inconceivable that so learned a man could have been responsible for so clumsy a forgery. A French translation of the work was presented to Voltaire in 1761. It was printed in French in 1768 under the title *L'Ezour Vedam ou ancien commentaire du Vedam (l'exposition des opinions religieuses et philosophiques des Indous) traduit du Sanscretam par un Brahme*. A German translation followed in 1769. Voltaire regarded it as genuine, and called it 'the most precious gift for which the West has ever been indebted to the East'. As early as 1782 the German scholar Sonnerat had shewn the work to be a forgery (A.W. Schlegel, *Indische Bibliothek*, vol. II, pp. 50ff). M. Winternitz,

## Appendices to Chapter 12

*Gesch. der Ind. literatur*, vol. 1, p. 12 n. 1, recognises the *Ezour-Vedam* as a *pia fraus* but mistakenly attributes it to 'the missionary Robertus de Nobilibus'. (The Eng. trans. vol. 1, p. 13 n. differs markedly from the German).

The judgement of Max Müller is accepted by the whole learned world today:

Whether [Nobili] actually composed such a work [a new Veda] we do not know, but it seems quite certain that the notorious *Ezour-Veda* was not his work. This Ezour was a poor compilation of Hindu and Christian doctrines mixed up together in the most childish way, and was probably the work of a half-educated native convert at Pondicherry . . . In plain English, the whole work is childish drivel (*Works*, vol. II, pp. 39-40).

See S. Rājāmāṇickam SJ, *The First Oriental Scholar*, pp. 94-6, who mentions also the view put forward by Fr Hosten SJ that the work may have been produced in Bengal (*JIH*, May 1923, p. 138).

### APPENDIX 27 ROBERT NOBILI AND HIS WRITINGS

We know today a great deal more about Nobili than was known thirty years ago, largely through the tireless work of the late Fr A. Saulière SJ, and of Fr S. Rājāmāṇickam SJ. Fr Rājāmāṇickam's book *The First Oriental Scholar* (1972), is an excellent summary of the state of research up to that date.

Fr Rājāmāṇickam gives on p. 114 a list of no less than thirty-eight Tamil works which have been attributed to Nobili; and on p. 116 a shorter list of twenty-one, which can be with considerable confidence ascribed to him. By far the most important of these works are:

- (1) *Gnānopadēsa Kāṇḍam* (Spiritual Instruction) a Catechism in four parts.
- (2) *Gnānopadēsam* in simpler form; twenty-six sermons
- (3) *Attuma Nirṇayam* (Disquisition on the Soul)
- (4) *Duṣaṇa Dhikkāram* (Refutation of blasphemies)

Also deserving of mention are:

- (5) *Punar Jenma Ākṣepam* (Refutation of Transmigration)
- (6) *Nitya Jīvana Callāpam* (Discourse on Eternal Life)
- (7) *Kadavu! Nirṇayam* (Disquisition on God's Nature)

All these are now in print in Tamil.

On pp. 119-39 of his book Fr Rājāmāṇickam gives a useful summary of these all-important works. Furthermore, on pp. 198-220 he gives samples of Nobili's prose, printed in Tamil with rather literal translations. These will

be specially useful to those who know Tamil, but instructive also to those who do not.

It is generally held that no Sanskrit work of Nobili has survived. Fr Rājāmāṅickam would like to make an exception in favour of one work, *Sri Khrīṣṭu Gītā*, of which he gives a Sanskrit text (in transliteration) and translation (pp. 86–90); he refers also to a number of works which may possibly be from the hand of Nobili. Much more study will be required before a reliable judgement on this subject can be made.

Of Latin works three are of capital importance:

- (1) The *Responsio* or 'Apology', to which a number of references are made in the text of this chapter.
- (2) The *Informatio de quibusdam Moribus Nationis Indicae* (*Information on some customs of the Indian People*). This was known to exist, and some quotations had been recognised in works by other writers. But the treatise itself was entirely lost until a copy was discovered in the Jesuit Historical Institute in Rome in 1968. (A second copy has since been found.) This has now been published both in Latin and in English translation by Fr S. Rājāmāṅickam, *Robert de Nobili – Indian Customs* (1972). This document contains the remarkable testimony of 108 learned men in Mathurai to the correctness of Nobili's eight propositions on the status and dignity of the Brāhmins (pp. 117–23).
- (3) *Narratio Fundamentorum quibus Missio Madurensis stabilitur*. This had disappeared from sight until Fr Rājāmāṅickam SJ was fortunate enough to discover two copies, one in Rome, and one in Chantilly, France. This he has now published under the title *Robert de Nobili on Adaptation* (1971). There can be no doubt that this is the statement prepared by Nobili for use at the Goa consultation of 1619. It is signed by Francis Roz SJ, then archbishop of Cranganore; but clearly this harmless stratagem was used because of the intense prejudice against Nobili which was known to exist in the minds of many of those present at the consultation.

#### APPENDIX 28 THE SANSKRIT GRAMMAR OF FR HENRY ROTH SJ

It was known that Fr Henry Roth SJ had composed a Sanskrit grammar on the basis of six years' study with a Brāhman teacher; there are various references to this in contemporary and later documents. But for more than a century and half the grammar itself had disappeared, and attempts to trace it had all been unsuccessful. Then, by a combination of tireless search and good luck, Professor A. Camps OFM was able, in 1967, to run the manuscript to earth in the National Library in Rome to which the books of

the Roman College of the Jesuits had been transferred.

Full information as to the grammar and two other accompanying documents is now available in three articles published in *ZMR*, 55 (1969):

- A. Camps OFM: 'Fr Heinrich Roth SJ (1620-1668) and the History of his Sanskrit Manuscripts', pp. 185-95.  
R. Hauschild: 'Zur Inhalt der drei Handschriften Roth's', pp. 195-202.  
B. Zimmel: 'Verzeichnis der Schriften, Briefe und Berichte Roths', pp. 203-5.

According to Roth himself, he had studied Sanskrit for six years, probably between 1654 and 1660. The earlier missionaries to Mogor had concentrated on Persian and the study of Islam. Roth had realised that the great majority of the people were Hindus, and that the key to the higher Hinduism was the Sanskrit language.

In 1662 Roth was ordered to accompany Fr John Grueber SJ on the last leg of his immense journey from Peking to Europe via Lhasa and Agra.<sup>52</sup> After a period in Europe, during which Roth made contact with Athanasius Kircher SJ and communicated to him the information and the Sanskrit types which Kircher incorporated in his *China Illustrata* (1666), Roth and Grueber set out for the return journey to India. In Skutari, where Grueber had fallen sick, they separated and Roth went on to India alone. By an extraordinary mischance, in the confusion of parting Roth's Sanskrit manuscripts were packed with Grueber's effects; in consequence Roth arrived in India in 1666 without his precious manuscripts, and died there in 1668. In the meantime Grueber had discovered the mistake, and had sent the manuscripts carefully to Rome where they were housed in the library of the Jesuit College.

The grammar is referred to by one George de Sepibus in a work published in 1678: 'Exactissimum opus totius grammaticae Brahmanicae, cujus et rudimenta is primus Europae communicavit'. The grammar, contained in the first manuscript, is an extremely competent piece of work. Roth had had an excellent teacher, from whom he had learnt not only the grammar but also the current nomenclature and grammatical terms. Roth had certainly intended the grammar to be published, and only adverse circumstances had prevented this from being carried out.

The second manuscript, also in the handwriting of Fr Roth, consists of two parts. The first is a carefully executed copy of the *Pañca-tattva-prakāśa* of Venidatta ('Explanation of the Five Elements'), a lexical work composed as it appears in the year 1644. The second is an equally careful copy of the *Vedāntasāra* ('essence of the Veda') of Sadānanda, which was written in 1490. This is an excellent introduction to the Advaita philosophy as



*Abraham Rogerius*

perfected by Śaṅkara. In the margin are Latin annotations, showing that Roth was preparing himself by the study of this text for deeper and fuller study of the unfamiliar world of Indian thought.

Nobili had certainly learned Sanskrit. But he lacked the philological interests of Roth, and, as far as we know, left nothing behind that could be compared with the work of Roth. Roth was undoubtedly a pioneer, undeservedly forgotten, but now restored to the eminence which is his due.

APPENDIX 29 ABRAHAM ROGERIUS

I had long been familiar with the great book of Abraham Rogerius under the title *Gentilismus Reseratus*, from the reference in *CHI*, vol. v, p. 53 (P. Geyl). Geyl gives also a quotation from A.C. Burnell in 1898 'Still perhaps the most complete account of South Indian Hinduism, though by far the earliest', though without the reference, which should be *Indian Antiquary*, 8, p. 98. Burnell was of course unaware of the work of Fr Fenicio, for which see Appendix 31. He gives the correct Dutch title of the work. I had been puzzled not to find the work listed under the Latin title in the catalogue of any of the great libraries in which I had been working. The diligence of Professor W. Caland has solved the mystery.

The Latin title goes back to C.G. Jöchen, *Allgemeine Gelehrten Lexikon*, vol. III (Leipzig, 1751), p. 2182. From this note many have concluded either that a Latin translation of the work had somewhere been published, though no copy of it is known to exist, or that Rogerius had originally written his work in Latin. Both suppositions appear to be groundless; there can be little doubt that Rogerius wrote in Dutch, and that what we have is the work substantially as it came from his hand.

The work is generally known as *De open-deure tot het verborgen Heyden-dom*, which appears on the title-page of the original edition (Leyden, 1651). To this is added the explanatory note 'A true presentation of the life and customs, and also of the religion and worship, of the Brahmans, on the Coast of Coromandel and the adjoining regions.'

A German translation appeared in 1663 as *Abraham Rogers Offne Thür zu dem verborgenem Heydenthum* (Nuremberg, 1663). A French edition was published in 1670 at Amsterdam, with the curious supplementary title 'le théâtre de l'idolatrie, ou la porte ouverte pour parvenir a la cognoissance du paganisme caché', with a further note that Rogerius 'a fort exactement recherché tout ce qu'il y avoit de plus curieux'.

I have been unable to find any reference to an English translation.

The excellent edition by Professor W. Caland appeared under the auspices of the Linschoten-Vereeniging (The Hague, 1915). Pages xxi to xxix give a careful account of what was known to western scholars about Hinduism before Rogerius took up his pen.

APPENDIX 30 THE 'HORTUS INDICUS MALABARICUS'

I have had the privilege of using the copy of this splendid work to be found in the Bodleian Library, Oxford.

Each tree or plant is depicted in beautiful line drawings, several to each specimen, showing both the whole and the various parts. The names are given in Malayalam (I have not in every case been able to trace these in the current Malayalam dictionaries, and the transliterations are not always correct), Latin, Arabic and Sanskrit. Then follows a careful botanical description of each in Latin, with a note of the use, if any, made of each plant by the Indian medical profession. There are also notes in which an attempt is made to link the evidence of the *Hortus* to the contemporary state of botanical knowledge in the West. It has to be remembered that, when the last volume (XII) of the *Hortus* appeared, Linnaeus had not yet been born, and botanical science had hardly emerged from its infancy.

The work is preceded by a number of prefaces, the first by John Casearius, who signs himself *Eccles. in Cochín*; the second by Fr Matthew of St Joseph, discaled Carmelite of the Province of Italy; the third by an Indian Christian, Emanuel Carneiro, who served as interpreter; the fourth by Itti Achuthen, 'Doctor Malabaricus'; the fifth by Ranga Botto, Vinayakan Paṇḍit, and Āyan Bottu, whose letters are printed in Malayalam with Latin translation, and who had helped in the collection of materials; the sixth by Arnold Syen, who noted the plants which had elsewhere been described by others, and as far as possible added Latin names according to the system of John Bauhin the Swiss botanist (Syen died before the second volume was in print).

For us the most important of these prefaces is the first, that by John Casearius. In this he pays compliments to Fr Matthew for his contribution to the work, but explains that, owing to the burdens of his ecclesiastical labours, the Carmelite was not able to contribute what was needed for the completion of the volume; reading between the lines it is easy to see that Fr Matthew, though a great collector and experimental botanist, lacked the general culture and scientific training required in the production of a work on this scale and on this level of excellence. So Casearius was drawn into the work: 'So, in order that the purpose of our noble lord [van Rheede] might be carried into effect, I found myself stirred up to offer such services as I could . . . not without antecedent protestation, on the ground of my feeble capacities, and that I had not previously been engaged in the study of plants.' But the co-operation of Casearius was of short duration; having prepared the material for the first two volumes, he died before the first volume was in print. He is commemorated in a rather fulsome Latin poem

### *Baldaeus and His Sources*

prefixed to the second volume (1673) by Dr William ten Rhyne of Batavia; his death is ascribed to what seems to have been a combination of pleurisy and dysentery:

Hocque imperfectum rellinquens grande volumen:  
Cur non, ut primum, caetera finieras?

Casearius received commemoration in another and unusual way. Ersch and Grubers *Allgemeine Enzyklopädie* (Leipzig, 1836), gives the interesting information that the distinguished botanist Nicolas Joseph Jacquin (1727–1817) out of admiration for the work of Casearius gave his name to a family of plants which he had discovered in the Caribbean (his work was published in Vienna in 1780). For further information about Casearius, I am indebted to Winkler Prins, *Allgemeene Encyclopaedie* (1933<sup>5</sup>), vol. IV s.v.

#### APPENDIX 31 BALDAEUS AND HIS SOURCES

The recovery of the *Livro da Seita dos Indios Orientais*, and correct attribution of it to the Jesuit Fr Fenicio, who was in India from about 1584 onwards, worked in various parts of the Malabar country, and finally died in Cochin in 1632 at the age of 75, reads like a detective story. The detective in this case was Professor Jarl Charpentier of the university of Uppsala, who gave a first account of his discoveries in an article in *BSOS*, 2 (1921–3), pp. 731–54, and more fully in his edition of the *Livro da Seita* (Uppsala, 1933), pp. x to civ.

The hunt starts with the learned Paulinus a S. Bartolomaeo, a Carmelite missionary in Malabar, who in 1792 wrote that a colleague of his own order, Fr Ildephonsus of the Presentation, who had died in 1789, had written a large work on the religion and superstitions of the pagans in India and especially in Malabar. The manuscript of this work had disappeared, but from the quotations given by Paulinus (printed by A. J. de Jong in his edition of the *Afgoderye* of Baldaeus, pp. 211–12) it can now be shewn that Ildephonsus, like so many others, was not an original writer, but did no more than translate into rather barbarous Latin the work of an earlier Portuguese writer whom he nowhere names.

The next witness is a Portuguese, Manuel de Faria y Sousa, who wrote in Spanish a work called *Asia Portuguesa*, published in Lisbon between 1666 and 1675, after the death of the author in 1649. Careful comparison of the section in this work on the gods and ceremonies of the Hindus with the parallel sections in the work of Baldaeus makes it plain that both have used the work of an earlier author but that neither has borrowed from the other (A. J. de Jong, pp. lxxff). Who could this earlier writer be?

In 1922 Charpentier, with the help of Fr G. Schurhammer, found in the British Museum a manuscript with the number Sloane 1820, and the title *Livro da Seita dos Indios Orientais. E principalmente os Malavares*. This is not the original manuscript of the work but a copy conflated from two manuscripts, beautifully clear and well preserved. It was at once evident that this was a work of the highest importance, and that it was the common source, so far unknown, of Faria y Sousa, of Ildephonsus and of Baldaeus.

Who was the author? Once again Fr Schurhammer helped by drawing the attention of Charpentier to Fr Fenicio, who was known to have spent many years in Malabar in the early years of the seventeenth century. A number of tenuous clues had still to be followed up, but on p. 748 of the article referred to Charpentier was able to write that 'these extracts from the letters of Fr Fenicio prove beyond any shadow of doubt that he is the author of the manuscript on the religion of Malabar'. He adds, 'Altogether, Fr Fenicio well deserves a place among the many eminent forerunners of the present European knowledge of India.'

It is clear that a number of copies of the work of Fenicio existed in India. There is no evidence as to where Baldaeus had access to a copy. Nor is it known how the copies now in the British Museum came first into the possession of the great collector Sir Hans Sloane, and after his death in 1753 into the possession of the Museum.

The second part of the story is of a rather different character. Dr de Jong had noticed, before 1917, that there was a clear resemblance between all that Baldaeus had written on the incarnations of Viṣṇu, and the treatment of the same subject in the work of Dr Olpert Dapper, entitled *Asia, an exact description of the kingdom of the Great Mogul, and of a great part of the Indies*, which was published in Amsterdam in 1672. Dr Dapper was a medical doctor, with a special interest in geography, on which he had published a number of books. The dates make it clear that Dapper could not have copied from Baldaeus nor Baldaeus from Dapper. The two of them had drawn from a source common to both.

Once again the persistence of Professor Charpentier was rewarded by discovery. In the British Museum he found a manuscript, Sloane 3290, which proved to be the common source of Dapper and Baldaeus. This is a small book in Dutch, entitled *Description of the following figures taken out of the heathen law-book [work on religion], which is called Deex autaers [= daśa-avatāras, the ten incarnations]*. The work is clearly intended as an introduction to ten Indian drawings, depicting the ten incarnations of Viṣṇu. After further researches Charpentier was able to run to earth the actual drawings described in the manuscript, though these have been considerably altered in preparation for the printed text of Dapper. These are

### *Armenians in India*

not the illustrations given in the work of Baldaeus, the source of which remains unknown.

Charpentier's results, as given in *BSOS*, 3 (1923-5), pp. 415-20, may be taken as wholly reliable.

A Dutchman, or possibly a native convert with a good knowledge of Dutch, composed at Surat between the years 1649-57 a work dealing with the ten *avataaras* of Viṣṇu, and drawing his materials from written as well as oral sources. The work was meant to be a sort of text-book to a set of drawings representing the ten manifestations of the supreme god. Of this work at least two copies must have existed, one of which fell into the hands of Baldaeus, – probably during his stay in India – who made a most extensive use of it, without, however, mentioning anything about his source.

His sad conclusion is that 'Baldaeus never in any way deserved the reputation for being a conscientious and reliable writer, in which he has for a long time rejoiced.'

#### APPENDIX 32 ARMENIANS IN INDIA

An interesting addition to the literature of the Armenian community in India is a Russian work, R.A. Abramyan, *Armyanskie Istorniki XVIII Veka ob Indii* (Erevan, 1968) (*Eighteenth Century Armenian Sources on India*). The work is fortunately provided with a summary in English. The greater part of the work consists of translations of two Armenian works, *The History of India*, by T. Khojamall, to which reference is made in our text; and the *Life of Hyder Ali*, by Hakop Simonian.

The aim of the writer can hardly be described as impartial history. 'Armenian sources . . . would alike lay bare, to a great measure, some perversions of historical truth by bourgeois and particularly by English historians who have approached the matter from colonial standpoint' (p. 268). 'The English began ever since not only to oust the Armenians as their rivals in trade but they took to outright persecution; the Armenians were sentenced, thrown into prison, their goods taken away, and their merchant vessels confiscated . . . That is why they would side with the Indian people in fighting the colonisers' (p. 274). But the writer is fain to admit that 'one should not unduly infer that anti-British feeling ran high with all the Armenians and therefore all of them rose up, as one man, against British rule. There were Armenians who were of positively pro-British orientation and defended British interests' (pp. 274-5).

The misprints in the bibliography suggest that the writer is not well acquainted with the English language.

# Notes

## I THE INDIAN BACKGROUND

- 1 The *Linguistic Survey of India*, vol. 1 (Calcutta, 1927), especially the Introduction, pp. 1–24, tells us that 177 languages and 544 dialects are spoken.
- 2 R. Caldwell, *A Comparative Grammar of the Dravidian or South Indian Languages* (London, 1856; 3rd ed. by J.L. Wyatt and T.R. Pillai, London 1913), pp. 61–77.
- 3 The name Munda was adopted by the great philologist Max Müller in 1854. The inaccurate term Kolarian is still sometimes used.
- 4 On Burushaski, see the delightful account in (Mrs) E.O. Lorimer, *Language Hunting in the Karakoram* (London, 1939), pp. 248–63. On attempts to link Burushaski with languages of the Caucasus, see G. Morgenstierne, ‘The Linguistic Stratification of Afghanistan’, *Afghan Studies*, 2 (1979), 23.
- 5 No more than approximate dating of the Indus civilisation is possible; but the convergence of various forms of evidence seems to make impossible any date later than the middle of the third millennium BC for its beginnings. See also F.R. Allchin, ‘Antecedents of the Indus Civilisation’, in *Proceedings of the British Academy*, 66 (1981), pp. 135–60.
- 6 The best general account of all this is Sir Mortimer Wheeler, *The Indus Valley Civilisation* (Cambridge, 1968<sup>3</sup>).
- 7 M. Wheeler, p. 55.
- 8 Percy Brown, *A History of Indian Architecture*, vol. 1, p. 1, quoted in B. Rowland, *Art and Architecture of India* (London, 1977<sup>2</sup>), p. 32.
- 9 Evidence of trading connections between the Indus valley and ancient Sumer is steadily accumulating. For a recent survey see E.C.L. During Caspars, ‘Sumer, Coastal Arabia and the Indus Valley; . . . Supporting Evidence for a Cultural Linkage’, *JESHO* (May, 1979), 121–35.
- 10 For a careful study of the linguistic question, including a useful survey of all the attempts at decipherment, see J.E. Mitchener, *Studies in the Indus Valley Inscriptions* (Oxford and IBH, 1978). The writer is less pessimistic than some others as to the possibility of decipherment, and thinks that the language is an ancient form of Indo-Āryan speech.
- 11 M. Wheeler, p. 109.
- 12 For a different possibility, see *Ancient India*, 18/19 (1962/3), 7–207.
- 13 A modern comprehensive introduction to the whole Vedic world in the broad

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- general sense is now available in R. Panikkar and others, *The Vedic Experience: Mantramāñjarī* (London, 1979<sup>2</sup>). This perhaps takes the place of all earlier introductions. Less romantic and more scientific is the work of Jan Gonda, *Vedic Literature* (Wiesbaden, 1975), pp. 1–266; with which may be read J. Gonda, *Change and Continuity in Indian Religion* (The Hague, 1965).
- 14 For translations see Panikkar, pp. 163–70.
- 15 ‘Like bellowing cows the waters flowed in haste; straight downwards to the sea they went’ (*RV.* 1.32). This vivid scene is frequently interpreted of the imprisonment of the waters in the sky; these Indra sets free when he strikes the clouds with his thunderbolt, the lightning. But another and perhaps better interpretation is that which sees Vṛtra as the demon of winter, who locks the waters in his iron clasp. The Āryans must have been amazed at the Indian rivers, which are dry in winter, and flow readily in spring when the sun melts the snow far away in the mountains; so different from their experience in their European home, where the rivers are flooded in winter and run dry in summer.
- 16 A.A. Macdonell’s verse translation is given in full in M. Winternitz, *History of Indian Literature* (Leipzig, 1908–20; Eng. trans. 1927), vol. 1, pp. 85–7.
- 17 M. Winternitz, vol. 1, p. 85 (Eng. trans.).
- 18 *Atharva-veda* IV.16. This is a paraphrase; for a more literal translation see M. Bloomfield, *Hymns of the Atharva-veda*, SBE, 42 (Indian reprint, 1964), p. 88. The *Atharva-veda* as a whole is later than the *RV.*, but it is probable that it contains many ancient elements. Largely composed of charms and spells, it gives clear evidence of the darker side of Āryan religion, and may include, as Winternitz thinks, elements that antedate the arrival of the Āryans in India. The noble lines quoted above actually form part of an imprecation.
- 19 *RV.* v.85:7.
- 20 *RV.* VII.89:5.
- 21 A.B. Keith, *Cambridge History of India*, vol. 1 (1922), p. 156.
- 22 J. Gonda, *Die Religionen Indiens*, vol. 1 (1960), pp. 78–9.
- 23 The philosophical hymns have been dealt with in detail by P. Deussen, *Allgemeine Geschichte der Philosophie*, vol. 1, 1 (Leipzig, 1922), pp. 95–158.
- 24 Trans. A.A. Macdonell, *Vedic Reader for Students* (Oxford, 1917), pp. 207–11. It has seemed better to give this somewhat prosaic rendering rather than one of the imaginative paraphrases of which there are many.
- 25 *RV.* III.62:10. On this Monier-Williams correctly remarks ‘this prayer . . . like the Lord’s Prayer among Christians, or like the *Fātiḥah* or opening chapter of the Kurān among Muhammadans, must always among Hindūs take precedence of all other forms of supplication’, *Brahmanism and Hinduism* (London, 1891), p. 17. For a rather different translation see R.H.J. Griffith, *Hymns of the Rg Veda*, vol. 1 (Indian reprint of 1963), with an interesting note on the first English translation of the *Gāyatrī* by Sir W. Jones (1746–94).
- 26 Such as the story of Śunahṣepa, the young man who was in danger of being offered up as a human sacrifice. The story is told in *Aitareya Brāhmaṇa* VII.13–18, and in outline in M. Winternitz, vol. 1, pp. 211–16.
- 27 *Śatapatha-Brahmaṇa* II.2:2.6; IV.3:4.4. There is a complete translation of this,

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- the longest and most important of the *Brāhmaṇas* by Julius Eggeling in SBE, 12, 26, 41, 43 and 44. This is what the Brāhmins claimed: it does not follow that reality corresponded in every detail to the claim. But the influence of the Brāhman priests was certainly very great.
- 28 M. Winternitz, vol. 1, p. 200.
- 29 The term *Upaniṣad* is loosely used, and many later works, more than a hundred in all, have attached themselves to the corpus. It is customary to reckon thirteen or fourteen as principal. The oldest among these are the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka*, *Chāndogya*, *Taittirīya*, *Aitareya*, *Kaustaki*, and *Kena*. Important in the second category are the *Kāṭhaka* and the *Śvetāśvatara*.
- 30 This great passage is found also in *Satapata-Brāhmaṇa* x.6:3.
- 31 See e.g. *Maitrāyaṇa Upaniṣad* 1.2-4.
- 32 *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* III.2:13.
- 33 *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* IV.4:23-5.
- 34 W. Schubring 'Der Jainismus' in *Die Religionen Indiens*, vol. III (1964), pp. 217-41, an excellent short account. More fully in *The Religion of the Jainas* (Calcutta, 1966). Modern research has fixed the period of Vardhamāna Mahāvīra as falling between 550 and 477 BC. This makes him an almost exact contemporary of Gautama the Buddha.
- 35 W. Schubring, in *Die Religionen Indiens* p. 240. We should not forget the service rendered by the Jains in their use of a *prākṛit*, that of Ardha-Māghadhī, in place of Sanskrit for the expression of their classical works, and an even more popular form of language for the dissemination of their teachings. *Imperial Gazetteer of India*, vol. II, p. 261.
- 36 There are innumerable lives of the Buddha. I always go back with great satisfaction to H. Oldenberg, *Buddha, sein Leben, sein Lehre, seine Gemeinde* (Stuttgart, 1958) which though it originally appeared in 1881, is still regularly reprinted. The English translation of the first edition, which came out in 1882, has been reprinted and is again available. See bibliography. Oldenberg has to be supplemented by E.J. Thomas, *The Life of Buddha as Legend and History* (London, 1927).
- 37 The usual translation of the term *Buddha* as the Enlightened One is not entirely satisfactory; the root *bodh* implies rather the one who is awake when all other men are asleep.
- 38 For an example of a much more critical approach to the Buddhist sources, see David L. Snellgrove, 'Śākyamuni's Final Nirvāṇa', *BSOAS* (1973), 399-411. He quotes R.H. Robinson and W.L. Johnson, *The Buddhist Religion* (1977<sup>2</sup>), p. 19: 'The quest for the objective Gautama, like that for the historical Jesus, is foredoomed to a measure of failure.'
- 39 *Dialogues of the Buddha*, part II, trans. T.W. and C.A.F. Rhys Davids (London, 1910), p. 113.
- 40 Modern knowledge of Aśoka begins with the decipherment, in 1836, by James Prinsep, of an Aśoka inscription in the Brāhmī script.
- 41 Trans. R. Thapar, *Aśoka and the Decline of the Mauryas* (OUP, 1973), pp. 40-1, 255. A useful, though not literal, translation, of all the edicts is supplied in this



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- work, pp. 250–66. An excellent photographic reproduction of Aśoka's Greek–Aramaic inscription is given opposite p. 260 in R. Thapar, *Aśoka*.
- 42 I do not myself think that there was any direct Buddhist influence on Christian origins, but the possibility cannot be completely excluded. Those who are interested may turn to an elaborate collection of parallels – A.J. Edmunds, *Buddhist and Christian Gospels* (Philadelphia, 1908<sup>4</sup>).
- 43 The census of 1971 gives a figure of 3,874,942, a percentage increase of 17.3 over 1961; the general increase of population in the same period was 24.80.
- 44 Many details are given in W.W. Tarn, *The Greeks in Bactria and India* (CUP, 1938). See esp. chap. 9, pp. 351–408: 'The Greeks and India'. 'Somewhere I have met with the whole-hearted statement that every Greek in India ended by becoming a Buddhist': (p. 391) – but 'there are only five Greeks whose religious predilections are known or can be deduced, and three of these were not Buddhists'.
- 45 See chap. 3, on the decline of Buddhist influence in South India.
- 46 Notably by F. Lorinser, whose metrical version of the *Gītā* appeared at Breslau in 1869. His views have been firmly dealt with by R. Garbe, *Indien und das Christentum* (Tübingen, 1914), pp. 244–7. See also M. Winternitz, vol. 1, p. 431 n. 1. For a judgement on the similar views of E.W. Hopkins, *Religions of India*, see Garbe, p. 210 n. 1. A general discussion of the theme is G.A. van den Bergh van Eysinga, *Indische Einflüsse auf evangelische Erzählungen* (Göttingen, 1904).
- 47 Two different words are used in XVIII.64 and 65. The form 'I love thee' is not used; but I think that this is a matter of Sanskrit idiom rather than of theological significance.
- 48 Detailed references in J. Gonda, *Vedic Ritual: the non-solemn rites* (Leiden–Köln, 1980).
- 49 The government of independent India, to its great credit, has by law abolished 'untouchability'; but the rigidity of the caste system yields only slowly to the winds of change.
- 50 Caution is needed. Some 'Pan-Dravidians' attribute all change in Indian religion to Dravidian influences; this carries the argument too far.
- 51 On Dravidian influences in Sanskrit, see T. Burrow, *The Sanskrit Language* (new ed. London, 1973), pp. 96–8 (consonants), pp. 374–87 (loan words). See also M.B. Emeneau, *Language and Linguistic Areas* (Stanford U.P., 1980), chap. 8 'Dravidian and Indo-Aryan: the Indian Linguistic Area'.
- 52 B. Rowland, *The Art and Architecture of India* (ed. of 1977), p. 153. For a valuable study of the chronology of Gandhāra art in the strict sense of the term, see A.D.H. Bivar, 'Hārītī and the Chronology of the Kusāṇas', *BSOAS*, 33 (1970), 10–21.
- 53 B. Rowland, p. 153.
- 54 D. Seckel, *The Art of Buddhism* (London, 1964), p. 40.
- 55 For a fine study of the Naṭarāja, see Douglas Barrett, 'The Dancing Siva in Early South Indian Art' in *Proceedings of the British Academy*, 62 (1976), pp. 181–203.
- 56 For a very different type of Indian sculpture, see W.G. Archer, *The Vertical*

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- Man: a study in Primitive Indian Sculpture* (London, 1947).
- 57 J. Gonda, *Religionen*, vol. 1, p. 244.
  - 58 See the careful discussion of the whole subject in W.D.P. Hill, *The Bhagavadgītā* (OUP, 1928), pp. 1-14.
  - 59 The most easily accessible study of the origin and development of the caste-system or systems of India is J.H. Hutton, *Caste in India; its Nature, Functions and Origin*, now in its fourth edition (OUP, 1963). Professor Hutton attaches less importance than I do to *varṇa*, colour, as one of the determining factors in the origin of caste.
  - 60 See above, p. 17.
  - 61 Both Monier-Williams and Macdonell, in their respective Sanskrit dictionaries, indicate this as the origin of the meaning 'caste', which came to be attached to a word of which the original sense is 'colour'.
  - 62 Dilip Chakrabarti, 'The Beginning of Iron in India', *Antiquity*, 50, no. 198 (June, 1976), 14-22. On the relation between Āryan and Dravidian civilisation and literature, see G.L. Hart, *The Relations between Tamil and Classical Sanskrit literature* (Wiesbaden, 1976).
  - 63 Professor Norvin Hein has reminded me that Tamil came to be written down only through the penetration of influences from the north; as far as we know it had no earlier and purely Dravidian script.
  - 64 S. Mahādevan, 'Tamil-Brahmi Inscriptions of the Sangam Age' in *Proceedings of the Second International Conference-Seminar of Tamil Studies* (Madras, 1968), pp. 73-106.
  - 65 This term, adopted by E.B. Tylor in his famous work *Primitive Culture* (1871) (the first reference given for the word in the *Oxford English Dictionary* is of the year 1866), is not popular today, since his definition of religion as 'the doctrine of souls and other spiritual beings in general' (vol. 1, 1891<sup>3</sup>, p. 23) is regarded as inadequate; his views were influenced by evolutionary speculations as to 'lower' and 'higher' forms of religion, which are seen today not to have been scientific. But no single term has been found to replace 'animism', as a generic term for the religion of simple peoples. Nearly all the religions of this type are without literary tradition.
  - 66 A beginning was made in the study of this line of Indian religion by the Lutheran Bartholomew Ziegenbalg in his remarkable work *The Genealogy of the Malabaric Gods*, written before 1716, but not published till 1867 in German (English 1869). There has been a welcome increase in interest in such studies in recent years. A useful introduction is L.S.S. O'Malley, *Popular Hinduism, the Religion of the Masses* (Cambridge, 1935) which has no bibliography, but gives references to most of the books available at the time of publication. A more recent study is H.H. Presler, *Primitive Religions in India. A text-book on the Primitive Religious Type among India's Tribals* (Bangalore: Indian Theol. Library, 1971).
  - 67 This is the subject of Curt Maury, *Folk Origins of Indian Art* (New York and London, 1969), a work which, in spite of its neglect of South India, Dr J.R. Marr calls 'an excellent survey, and a most valuable gathering together of a

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- number of seemingly diverse traditions and trends of popular Hinduism', *BSOAS* (1971/2), 382-4.
- 68 This is suggested by the many remarkable similarities, both in vocabulary and practice, between ancient Indian religion and the earliest forms of the religion of Zarathustra. See R.C. Zaehner, *The Dawn and Twilight of Zoroastrianism* (London, 1961).
- 69 G.M. Moraes, *A History of Christianity in India* (Bombay, 1964), pp. 38-9. He refers to the work of H.S. Kehimkar, *The History of the Bene-Israel of India*. Mr Kehimkar (1830-1909) had completed this work not later than 1897; but it remained unpublished until disinterred by a Jewish scholar and published at Tel Aviv in 1937. Kehimkar takes the view that the Bene-Israel came to India 'about 175 years before the Christian era' (p. 23).
- 70 Moraes, p. 38.
- 71 The whole question of Jews in India has been dealt with very prudently by J.H. Lord in articles, 'Jews in Cochin (Malabar)' in Hastings *ERE*, vol. VII (1914), pp. 557-9; and 'Bene-Israel' in *ERE*, vol. II (1909), pp. 469-74. Lord's collected essays *The Jews in India and the Far East* (1907) have been reprinted by Greenwood Press, Inc. (1976). On Fr Lord, and his work in Bombay (1882-1924) see W. Ashley-Brown, *On the Bombay Coast and Deccan* (London, 1937), pp. 222-3. The first in modern times to draw the attention of the western world to Jews in India was Claudius Buchanan, whose *Christian Researches in Asia* were a best-seller from 1811 onwards. His speculations on Jews in India did not meet with the favour of the learned world; but his vivid description of his experiences among them still makes good reading.

## 2 CHRISTIANITY COMES TO INDIA

- 1 The *Acts of Thomas* is most conveniently accessible in M.R. James, *The Apocryphal New Testament* (OUP, 1926<sup>2</sup>), pp. 364-437.
- 2 Among distinguished scholars who have denied any credibility to the Acts, are R. Garbe, *Indien und das Christentum* (1914, Eng. trans. 1959); A. Harnack, *Mission und Ausbreitung* (1924<sup>4</sup>, Eng. trans. 1908<sup>2</sup>); L. de la Vallée Poussin, *L'Inde aux temps des Mauryas* (1930). Of these the last, who gives an extensive bibliography, is the most categorical (p. 280).
- 3 There is a fascinating account of Masson in C. Grey, *European adventurers of northern India 1785 to 1849* (Lahore, 1929), pp. 176-210.
- 4 *Narrative of various journeys in Baluchistan, Afghanistan and the Punjab* (1812, reprint of 1974, introd. by Gavin Hambly), pp. xvii-xviii. Masson began to publish his discoveries in the *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal* in 1834. The centenary review of that Society (1885, part II, pp. 30-1), records that 'the first great step in the series of Bactrian numismatic discovery was thus accomplished, and the great object of later investigations became only to complete and extend the structure, of which such broad foundations had been laid'.
- 5 All subsequent accounts are based on the work of E.J. Rapson, summarised in

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- CHI*, vol. 1, chap. 23, 'The Scythian and Parthian Invaders', pp. 562–87. Attempts have been made to see the name of Gondopharnes in Gaspar, one of the three wise men of the East of Matthew 2, through the Armenian Gathaspar. *CHI*, vol. 1, p. 579 n. 1.
- 6 See W.W. Tarn, *The Greeks in Bactria and India* (CUP, 1938, 1951<sup>2</sup>), especially 'The Greeks and India', pp. 351–408. Gondopharnes may have been the last king in India to use Greek lettering on his coins.
  - 7 *India and the Apostle Thomas* (London, 1905).
  - 8 *The Apostle Thomas in North India* (Manchester, 1926).
  - 9 *Die Thomas-Legende und die ältesten historischen Beziehungen des Christentums zum fernen Osten im Lichte der indischen Altertumskunde* (Freiburg i. B., 1912).
  - 10 pp. 12, 13. On this Garbe, p. 135, somewhat caustically remarks 'I cannot find that in the course of his investigations Dahlmann has allowed himself to be guided by the critical spirit which has found expression in these words.'
  - 11 But note that the *Milinda-pañha* can hardly be later than the first century BC.
  - 12 A. Mingana, *The Early Spread of Christianity in India* (Manchester, 1926), p. 18, quoting *St Ephraemi Hymni*, ed. T.J. Lamy (1882–1902), IV:701, 703.
  - 13 There were present four bishops from the western world including Ossius of Cordova, personally commissioned by the emperor Constantine as his watchdog.
  - 14 *Life of Constantine*, Gr. Chr. Schr.: 'Eusebius', vol. 1, p. 80, l. 14. This is also confirmed by the rather unreliable writer Cyzicenus: 'John, a Persian for the churches in the whole of Persia and Great India' (Migne, PG 85:1342) both quoted by Mingana, p. 63.
  - 15 Mingana suggests with considerable probability that this prelate would be the metropolitan of Riwardeshir.
  - 16 Tarn, p. 369, makes the agreeable suggestion that 'he was not a man at all but either a sailors' name like Davy Jones or a personification of the monsoon'.
  - 17 E.H. Warmington, *The Commerce between the Roman Empire and India* (London, 1974<sup>2</sup>), p. 46. The whole question is elaborately discussed by Warmington, pp. 42–51; also by Tarn, pp. 367–72; and by Sir Mortimer Wheeler, *Rome Beyond the Imperial Frontiers* (London, 1954), pp. 126–30.
  - 18 In the museum at Arezzo there is an excellent display of Arretine pottery. Some of the figurines are of extraordinary delicacy and beauty. One of the main workshops can be dated as having flourished between the years 30 BC and AD 25.
  - 19 Wheeler, p. 129. The discoveries at Arikamedu were first reported in *Ancient India* (July, 1946), 17–124.
  - 20 In a number of Western books, e.g. J.I. Miller, *The Spice Trade of the Roman Empire 29BC to AD641* (Oxford, 1969), p. 143, this is called the 'Coimbatore Gap'.
  - 21 A number of scholars now prefer a date at least a century later than that indicated in the text. See a note by A.K. Irvine in *BSOAS*, 33 (1970), 388; and E.H. Warmington, p. 394a. Warmington holds to the earlier date; as does A. Dihle, *Umstrittene Daten* (Cologne, 1965), who after a careful study of all the

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- evidence concludes: 'The writing . . . presupposes that the information to be found in it is derived from an active trade with India. Such trade with India existed in the first and second centuries but not in the third.' Dihle, p. 35.
- 22 For details of the dangers to be encountered, see Arthur C. Clarke, *The Treasure of the Great Reef* (London, 1964), p. 24.
  - 23 The earlier patristic writers – Origen, the Clementine Recognitions, etc. – all connect the work of Thomas with Parthia. It is only in the fourth century, with Ambrose, Augustine and Chrysostom, that India begins to enter into the picture. The references have been conveniently collected in *Lex. f. Theol. u. Kirche* s.v. Thomas. The source on which these later writers depended was almost certainly the *Acts of Thomas*.
  - 24 Made available by W.J. Richards, *The Indian Christians of St Thomas* (London, 1908), pp. 72–7.
  - 25 Clearly, of the Sera, or Chera, king.
  - 26 This seems accurately to reflect the conditions existing in the days when the *Poligars* ruled, and before the three great kingdoms of the Coḷas, Cheras and Pāṇḍiyans came into existence.
  - 27 The latter village and family for many generations produced the archdeacon, the leading indigenous figure in the ancient church.
  - 28 *The Syrian Church in India* (Edinburgh, 1892), p. 361. No doubt there is an echo here of the seven churches in the Apocalypse of John in the New Testament. Whitehouse gives the names, with notes on each, as (1) Cranganore (Kodungalūr) (2) Quilon (Kollam) (3) Pālūr (4) Pārūr (5) South Pallipūram or Kokamangalum (6) Neranum (7) Nellakul – called also Chael or Shail; *Lingerings of Light in a Dark Land* (London, 1873), pp. 25–42.
  - 29 Mingana, pp. 48–9. Mingana is to be referred to also for other important documents of this type.
  - 30 The difficulty of representing Indian names in the Syriac script is well known. Bishop L.W. Brown, *The Indian Christians of St Thomas* (Cambridge, 1956), pp. 51–4, gives valuable indications about each of these names, with identifications, and some highly interesting legends from later times.
  - 31 The site of Chael has not been certainly identified. There are reasons for thinking that it lay east of Rānni in the tangled mountainous country which separates Kerala from the Tamil-speaking district of Tirunelveli.
  - 32 Sir H. Yule, *The Book of Ser Marco Polo*, vol. II (London and Edinburgh, 1903), pp. 353–5.
  - 33 *Viaggio alle Indie Orientali*, vol. I (Rome, 1796), p. 61. The English translation *A Voyage to the East Indies* (1800), is at this point much abridged and does not correctly represent what Paulinus wrote.
  - 34 The story of the church and tomb at Mylapore has been dealt with at great length and with immense erudition by Fr G. Schurhammer SJ, *Francis Xavier*, vol. III (Eng. trans. Rome, 1980), pp. 566–88.
  - 35 This is obscure. 'Mudaliyar' could be interpreted 'principal person', but it has never been a royal title.
  - 36 The authority for this account is the report verbally delivered by Diogo

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- Fernandes at an official hearing in 1533, preserved in the Jesuit archives in Rome: Goa 31: 18–25v. (text A). A copy of the year 1600 (text B), which differs in some details is to be found in the same source, Goa 49: 125–8v. This text has been published in English in *Kerala Soc. Papers*, 2 (1932), pp. 205–24. See Schurhammer, vol. III, pp. 560–1. Reported also in detail by G. Correa, *Lendas da India* (Lisbon, 1858–61), vol. II, pp. 722–6, 788–9; this account is used by A. da Silva Rêgo, *Missões* (Lisbon, 1949), pp. 416, 419–24.
- 37 These bricks are about 15½ inches long, 8 inches wide and 5 inches thick. B.A. Figueredo in *Voices from the Dust: Archaeological Finds in San Thomé and Mylapore* (Madras, 1952), pp. 21–2, states that ‘these measurements correspond to those of the bricks at Arikamedu’, and Mr A.H. Longhurst agrees that these measurements confirm the antiquity of the bricks, i.e. as being of the first century AD.
- 38 If a span is reckoned at about nine inches (229 mm), this means a depth of nearly twelve feet (3.6 m).
- 39 Yule, *Marco Polo*, vol. II, p. 341 tells of the Govy, who are very glad to eat beef, though they dare not kill the animal. They must have belonged to one of the groups later known as untouchable.
- 40 *Marco Polo*, II, p. 355.
- 41 F.E. Keay, *History of the Syrian Church in India* (London, 1951<sup>3</sup>), p. 31. L.W. Brown remarks that ‘the connection of St Thomas with the peacock . . . is constant, and requires investigation’.
- 42 In a review of F.A. D’Cruz, *St Thomas the Apostle in India* in *Journal of the Bombay Historical Society* (1929), 284–9.
- 43 e.g. *St Thomas Tombs, Skeletons and Bodies* (Poona, 1950); *Not St Thomas, but a Muslim Thomas in South India* (Chenganoor, 1959); and others.
- 44 *Indian Christians*, p. 59.
- 45 The most recent edition of Cosmas, with valuable introduction and notes, is by Wanda Wolska-Conus, *Sources chrétiennes*, nos. 141, 159, 197 (Paris, 1968, 1970, 1973).
- 46 Wolska-Conus, I, p. 17.
- 47 The Greek word is frequently used of *foreigners* residing in a country not their own; it would be specially appropriate if used of Persian merchants resident abroad on their business.
- 48 J.W. McCrindle, *Christian Topography of Cosmas Indicopleustes* (London, 1907), translated ἀλλόφυλοι by ‘quite another kind of people’; the error has gone on from one book to another and has misled even the learned Dr Mingana and Bishop Brown. McCrindle had failed to notice that in the Septuagint, the Greek translation of the Old Testament, ἀλλόφυλοι is the regular term used of the Philistines, the idolaters. It has even made its way into the text of the New Testament at Acts 10: 28. It would be impossible for that devout student of the scriptures Cosmas to use the word in any other sense. One modern writer thinks that Cosmas means by the term Buddhists. It seems to me much more likely that he meant *Hindus*, whose idol-worship is almost the first thing that strikes a foreigner about them.

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- 49 Kalyan, south of Bombay, is put forward by some as having a rival claim.
- 50 The whole may have been *simhala-dvīpa*, island of lions. Note that this, being an Indo-Āryan name, cannot have been the original local name, which will have been Dravidian. The identity of Taprobane, and other names for Ceylon, are learnedly discussed by Sir J.E. Tennent, *Ceylon*, vol. I (London, 1859<sup>3</sup>), p. 525 n. 1.
- 51 Excavation has hardly begun in these ancient centres of commerce. Archaeology may have much to reveal that at present is hidden from us.
- 52 R. Garbe, pp. 153–6, expresses strongly the view that, apart from commercial contacts, the severe persecution of Christians by Sassanid rulers in Persia between AD 345 and 415 accounts for the presence of Persian Christians in South India, just as at a later date persecution of Zoroastrians by Muslims explains the presence in Bombay and its neighbourhood of the small Parsi community.
- 53 I myself believe, however, that ‘India’ is the original reading.
- 54 Migne, PG 59: 32.
- 55 R. Garbe, p. 154. Of the five peoples mentioned only the Egyptians (Copts) had, as far as we know, Bible translations in their own languages at the time at which Chrysostom was preaching.
- 56 *Oxyrhynchus Papyri*, series 3, no. 413 (1903), pp. 41–55.
- 57 *JRAS* (1904), 399–405. In 1936 a distinguished Indian historian, B.A. Saletore, came forward (*Ancient Karnāṭaka*, vol. I (Poona), pp. 584–97) with a fascinating interpretation of all the sections of the farce written in an Indian language; this he identifies as ancient Kanarese. Only an expert Kanarese scholar could determine the probability or correctness of his interpretations. But they certainly make good sense.
- 58 Oration 32:40, quoted by J. Kennedy in *JRAS* (1902), 377–87: ‘Buddhist Gnosticism and the System of Basilides’, esp. pp. 385–7. See also *JRAS* (1907), 933–5: ‘Krishna, Christianity, and the Gujars’.
- 59 *Historia Ecclesiastica* 5:10. Much the same account is given by Jerome (*de Viris Illustr.* 36, Migne, PL 23, col. 651), who elsewhere states that he went ‘ut Christus apud Brachmanos praedicaret’ (Ep. 74 ad Magnum). Note further that Jerome, like Eusebius, writes *Hebraeis litteris*, not *sermone*; if this Gospel ever existed, it was probably in Aramaic, written in Hebrew letters.
- 60 The title of an excellent book by J.N. Ogilvie (London, 1915), who accepts the Indian mission of Pantaenus, as does J. Gwynn in a valuable and well-informed article in *DCB*, vol. IV, s.v.
- 61 Those who are interested may follow up the tedious exchanges between Bunnell and the Rev. R. Collins in the columns of the *Ind. Antiquary*, 4 (1875), 153–5, 311–14; 5 (1876), 25–6. The matter is dealt with briefly by F.E. Keay, pp. 14–15.
- 62 Mingana, p. 10, quoting from the *Chronique de Seert, Patrol. Orient.*, vol. IV, pp. 236, 292.
- 63 We possess Philostorgius only in fragmentary form, and are mainly indebted to the summary provided by Photius. Gibbon remarks of him that ‘the credibility

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- of Philostorgius is lessened, in the eyes of the orthodox, by his Arianism; and, in those of rational critics, by his passion, his prejudice, and his ignorance', *Decline and Fall*, chap. 21.
- 64 Richards, pp. 83–8. I have shortened the account as given by Richards.
- 65 Mingana, p. 45.
- 66 This account has been printed in Malayalam by T.K. Joseph, *Malabar Christians and their Ancient Documents* (Trivandrum, 1929), Appendix II, pp. ii–iv. I do not know whether any English translation is in print.
- 67 G.U. Pope, *Tiruvāçagam* (Oxford, 1900), pp. xxx–xxxii, lxxvii–lxxii, gives a rather full account of the legendary encounter of Mañickavāçagar with Buddhist sages. It is possible that some memories of these stories have affected the Malayalam traditions.
- 68 So L.W. Brown, *Indian Christians*, p. 77. Is 1837 a misprint for 1873?
- 69 The clearest account of this curiously complicated story, here much simplified, is given in L.W. Brown, pp. 76–9, with reference to Malayalam documents; and among western writers especially to T. Whitehouse, *Lingerings of Light in a Dark Land* (London: William Brown, 1873), pp. 49–54.
- 70 Mingana, p. 32. The letter is given in Syriac with Latin translation by S. Giamil, *Genuinae Relationes inter Sedem Apostolicam* (Rome, 1902), pp. 579–80. His Latin differs in some respects from the English of Mingana; for Kaleh he reads 'Colon (quae Chilao dicitur)'. Giamil is concerned at every point to show the dependence of all Eastern churches, including the Indian, on Rome.
- 71 Naturally there is disagreement. Mingana argued in agreement with Sir J.E. Tennent (*Ceylon*, vol. I (1859<sup>3</sup>), pp. 582–606) that Kaleh is to be found in Ceylon (cf. Galle). H. Cordier argues in favour of Singapore or Malacca, a view that has failed to find general acceptance.
- 72 London (1861), vol. II, p. 66. Note the reference not only to Thomas but also to Bartholomew.
- 73 Translated by Mingana, pp. 42–8.
- 74 Mingana, pp. 66, 76.
- 75 The story of these plates and of the interpretation of them is so complex that it must be reserved for an Appendix, pp. 388–90.
- 76 This has been published in the *Kerala Society's Papers*, Series 4, pp. 180–2.
- 77 This plate has been translated and annotated by A.C. Burnell in *Ind. Antiquary*, 3 (November, 1874), 333–4.
- 78 More will be found about the controversies as to the date of this copper-plate in chap. 4, pp. 70f.
- 79 Excellent reproductions of the copper-plates are to be found in S.G. Pothan, *The Syrian Christians of Kerala* (Bombay, 1963), between pp. 32 and 33. For translation, see Appendix 1.
- 80 Summary in T.K. Joseph, *Malabar Christians* (Trivandrum, 1929), p. 34.
- 81 T.K. Joseph, p. 35, comments on the Mañigrāmakkār: 'i.e., the authorised leaders of the indigenous Christians of Quilon who had been there when Sabrison came'.
- 82 For these signatures, see L.W. Brown, pp. 87–9.
- 83 For further details on the crosses, see F.E. Keay, pp. 25–6. He notes that, on the



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- smaller cross in the church at Kottayam, there is an upper panel, with on each side of the cross the figure of a peacock. The connection of the peacock with the legend of St Thomas has already been noted. See p. 33.
- 84 I owe this fact to Dr A.C. Burnell, *Ind. Antiquary*, 3 (November, 1874), 313. Unfortunately he gives no reference and I have not pursued the matter through the countless folios of Baronius. The whole article, 'Pahlavi Inscriptions in South India', is worth consulting. The inquiring reader will find in Appendix IV a fairly satisfactory reconstruction of the Tamil text as put forth by the shrewd Brāhman, and a translation; and may for his edification compare it with the more reliable translation which appears in the text of this chapter.
- 85 Norrisian Professor of Divinity in the university of Cambridge, who had deciphered the Kufic signatures of witnesses on the ancient copper-plate referred to above.
- 86 And published in the *Journal of Theological Studies*, of which Burkitt was editor, in 1929, pp. 237-44.
- 87 Hardly the cross itself; the transportation of so massive an object would be unlikely though not impossible. And excellent granite is available in many parts of South India.

### 3 FROM MEDIEVAL TO MODERN

- 1 Well depicted in R. Thapar, *Aśoka and the Decline of the Mauryas* (OUP, 1973<sup>2</sup>).
- 2 The dates are not quite certain – accession 380 or 376; death between 413 and 415.
- 3 This date has been questioned, but seems to be accepted by the great majority of scholars.
- 4 On Bāṇa and the *Harṣacarita*, see conveniently A.B. Keith, *Classical Sanskrit literature* (Calcutta, 1947<sup>5</sup>), pp. 58-61, 75-9.
- 5 S. Beal, *Buddhist Records of the Western World* (London, 1884), pp. xviii-xx, and 210-23. And see R.C. Majumdar, 'Harsha-varḍana and his Time', in *History and Culture*, 3 (1954), pp. 96-123. The most recent study based on all the available materials is D. Devahuti, *Harsha – a political study* (Oxford, 1970).
- 6 K.M. Munshi, *History and Culture*, 3 (1954), p. xviii.
- 7 A.B. Keith, *A History of Sanskrit Literature* (Oxford, 1928), p. xvii. See also pp. 8-14, esp. p. 13: 'Its vitality as the learned speech of the educated classes was unimpaired, and it was victorious even in fields which were at first hostile to it.' He refers to the interesting discussion recorded in *JRAS* (1904), 453-87.
- 8 Keith describes this method by the curious term 'emboxment'. The Oxford English Dictionary has the verb 'embox' but not the noun 'emboxment'.
- 9 A subject dealt with fully and competently by A. Berriedale Keith, *The Sanskrit Drama* (Oxford, 1959).
- 10 The translation by Sir William Jones was reprinted in Calcutta in 1874. A verse translation was published in 1855, in a *de luxe* edition, by M. Monier-Williams, at that time professor in the college of Haileybury.
- 11 A.K. Coomaramswamy, *History of Indian and Indonesian Art* (London, 1927),

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- p. 90 n. 5. Coomaramswamy and others have noted that some of the greatest artistic triumphs in this period fall within the Buddhist tradition, and that here religious feeling expresses itself more largely than in the Hindu world of that time. Another critic remarks of some of these Buddhist figures that they 'are mild and gentle, and yet they are sustained by a real spirituality, and a will to help and enlighten, inspired by a mind which has understood the basic evils of the world and feels endless compassion for the miseries of all living beings', H. Goetz, *India: Five Thousand Years of Indian Art* (London, 1964), p. 108.
- 12 Goetz, p. 108. I have not found any evidence of an influence in India of the great artistic tradition which was growing up in the Byzantine world at the same time.
  - 13 Of these six systems – *Nyāya* (analysis), *Vaiśeṣika* (particular characteristics), *Sāṃkhya* (enumeration), *Yoga* (application), *Mīmāṃsā* (inquiring), *Vedānta* (end of the *Vedas*), only the last two can be considered specifically metaphysical, concerned with ultimate questions.
  - 14 AD 788 is the exact date given by the learned V.S. Ghate in Hastings *ERE*, vol. xi, S.V. Śaṅkarāchārya. But note that a number of scholars in recent times have been inclined to assign a rather earlier date to Śaṅkara, placing the date of his birth in the seventh century, and his activity about 700; see P. Hacker, *Orient. Literaturzeitung*, 59 (1964), pp. 235–6.
  - 15 There are innumerable studies of Śaṅkara, and he naturally occupies a central position in almost all studies of Indian philosophy. The best short exposition known to me is that by S. Dasgupta, *A History of Indian Philosophy*, vol. 1 (Cambridge, 1922), pp. 406–94.
  - 16 Dasgupta, p. 438.
  - 17 Dasgupta, pp. 487–90.
  - 18 Dasgupta, p. 492.
  - 19 This pseudo-Dionysius, as he is now generally called, had, of course, nothing to do with the first century convert of Paul in Athens (Acts 17: 34), though the great authority enjoyed by his works throughout the middle ages was due to this mistaken identification. On the diffusion of Neoplatonic thought, see A.H. Armstrong (ed.), *The Cambridge History of Later Greek and Early Medieval Philosophy* (CUP, 1967).
  - 20 A number of Indian Christian writers have pointed out that, by all accounts, Śaṅkarāchārya was born in Malabar, an area in which the church of the Thomas Christians was well established. So intelligent a young man could hardly have avoided making contact with Christian teachers, and so absorbing through them some of the ideas of Greek Christian philosophy. This view is put forward and strongly supported by, among others, Fr G.A. Anathil, *The Theological Formation* (Poona, 1966), p. 10: 'That he never mentioned a word about Christianity, where he could have found the highest wisdom he was seeking for, is one of the mysteries of India.' This rests upon pious imagination rather than on any evidence or probability.
  - 21 Details in *CAH*, vol. xii (1939), p. 271 n. 4. And see Appendix 3.
  - 22 *Vita*, chap. 3; see *Plotini Opera*, ed. P. Henry and H.R. Schwyzer, vol. 1 (1951), p. 4. At the time of this adventure Plotinus was thirty-nine years old.

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- 23 It is noteworthy, however, that the *Patristic Greek Lexicon* does not give a single instance of the use of the term *gymnosophistae* from any Christian writer of the first six centuries.
- 24 Renan, *Marc-Aurèle* (Paris, 1882<sup>3</sup>), p. 495.
- 25 *CAH*, vol. XII, p. 613.
- 26 Professor A.H. Armstrong, p. 221, notes that at some points the images of Plotinus 'take us right outside the range of the classical Hellenic imagination into the sort of imaginative world inhabited by the great artists of India'. But his judicious summing up is likely to commend itself to students both of Greek and Indian philosophy: 'his thought is entirely explainable as a personal development of Greek philosophy, without any need to postulate Oriental influences', pp. 200-1; but note especially p. 201 n. 1, and the suggestion that 'a comparison between them by someone properly equipped by nature and training to understand both might be very fruitful'.
- 27 A study of *The Decline of Buddhism in India* has been written by R.C. Mitra (Visva-Bharati, 1954), chap. 9, 'Buddhism in South India', pp. 103-24, is specially relevant to the present study; Dr Mitra gives valuable quotations, from inscriptions as well as from literary sources, and ends his survey, p. 124, with the judgement that 'the causes of the decline are to be sought more from within than from without'.
- 28 K.V. Zvelebil, *Tamil Literature* (Wiesbaden, 1974), p. 141: 'the date  $\pm$  550 AD seems thus to be the best available date at the moment'. The chronology of Tamil literature is notoriously uncertain. I am glad to find that, at almost every point, Zvelebil confirms the dating at which I had independently arrived.
- 29 Beal, pp. 228-30.
- 30 On the rise of the *Mahāyāna* form of Buddhism in South India, see Appendix 4.
- 31 V.A. Smith, *Early History of India* (Oxford, 1924), p. 474, quoting E. Hultzsch, *Ind. Antiquary*, 18, 240.
- 32 G.U. Pope, *Nāladīyār* (Oxford, 1893), p. xii. The dating of the three great Tamil romances still presents many difficulties. I judge the *Ćivakacintāmaṇi* by reason of its superior artistry and more complex metrical schemes to be later than the *Cilappatikāram* and the *Maṇimēkalai*. K.C. Zvelebil places it as late as the tenth century (p. 136), for which he advances strong but not entirely convincing arguments.
- 33 V.A. Smith, p. 475, provides the information that the sculptures of a temple at Tiruvattur in Arcot district record the executions in grisly detail. There is thus archaeological confirmation of the truth of the tradition.
- 34 For calculation of the dates, see F. Kingsbury and G.E. Phillips, *Hymns of the Tamil Saivite Saints* (Mysore, 1921), p. 29. Much depends on the synchronisation of these saints with the battle of Vādāpi in AD 642, one of the certainly established dates in South Indian history. See also *History and Culture*, 3 (1954), p. 240; and, for further details Appendix 5.
- 35 Brief mention should here be made of the great outreach of Hinduism into the world of South-east Asia, which was expanding throughout the period now under review. The best authority is G. Coedès, *Les états hindouisés d'Indochine*

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*et d'Indonésie* (Paris, 1964<sup>2</sup>); Eng. trans. *The Indianized States of Southeast Asia* (Honolulu, 1968).

- 36 In so far as this great work manifests any religious tendency it seems to belong to the Jain tradition. Dr Pope, *The 'Sacred' Kural* (London, 1886), pp. v–vi, denies that this can be so. But this view is supported by later writers, e.g. K.V. Zvelebil who writes 'The ethics of Tirukkural is a reflection of the Jain moral code, and its theology, if we can speak at all of any, reflects rather more the Jain doctrines than anything else' (p. 119).
- 37 Dr T.M.P. Mahādevan assigns Sambantar to the first half of the seventh century AD. He quotes from him the stanza, 'O, you who get disturbed by listening to the foolish teachings of the Jains and the Baudhdhas, come; by adoring the feet of the Lord of Nallūrperumāṇam (Śiva), *mokṣa* (release) will become easy of attainment.' *History and Culture*, 3 (1954), p. 432. The whole section, pp. 426–35, is worth consulting. Appar can also be placed with some confidence in the first half of the seventh century.
- 38 11:5:39–41, quoted by M. Dhavamony, *Love of God according to Śaiva Siddhānta* (Oxford, 1971), p. 101.
- 39 *Padma-purāṇa*, 'Uttarakhaṇḍa' 189:51.
- 40 See J. Gonda, *Die Religionen Indiens*, vol. 1, pp. 85–9.
- 41 K.N. Sivarāja Pillai, *The Chronology of the Early Tamils* (Madras, 1932), Appendix 1 'The Date of Mānickavāsagar', has put forward convincingly the arguments for assigning this writer to the ninth century. He writes 'The literary form of the Tiruvāsagam, its highly polished and pellucid diction, its numerous felicities of thought and expression, its marvellously developed prośodic forms and rhetorical turns, and above all the sense of artistry which runs throughout is more than sufficient to establish its later origin than the Devāram hymns', p. 220.
- 42 Fr Dhavamony has chosen rather the term *anbu*, love, as the central point for his notable exposition of the Śaivite *bhakti* movement. This he is fully entitled to do; both words are good and expressive Dravidian words.
- 43 *India's Religion of Grace and Christianity Compared and Contrasted* (Eng. trans. London, 1930).
- 44 J.B. Carman's *The Theology of Rāmānuja* (Yale, 1974), is a notable achievement in sympathetic understanding and exposition.
- 45 *Die Religionen Indiens*, vol. II (1963), p. 133.
- 46 The most elaborate study of *Śaiva-Siddhānta* yet made is K. Sivarama, *Śaivism in Philosophical Perspective* (1973). 688 pages are devoted to the study.
- 47 This is briefly stated in *Tiruvārūpāyan* VII:5: 'If they become one, both disappear; if they remain two, there is no fruition; therefore there is union and non-union.' Commentary: 'The condition of such souls must be a compound of duality and non-duality, mingled not merged.' (Trans. G.U. Pope, *Tiruvāṇṇagāṁ*, p. lvii.) The thirteen classics of the *Śaiva-Siddhānta* philosophy have been dealt with by Fr M. Dhavamony in *The Love of God* (1971). They may be dated with some confidence between AD 1150 and 1350.
- 48 G.U. Pope, *The 'Sacred' Kural* (1886), pp. ii, iii. There is a strong movement among contemporary Tamil Christians to claim for the *Tirukkural* a Christian

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- origin, or at least profound Christian influence upon it. The arguments adduced have not so far proved convincing.
- 49 For the chronology of the *Saiva-Siddhanta* classics, see note 47.
  - 50 Of the powerful Mappila or Moplah community of the west coast of India, the Census report of 1881 remarked that 'among some of them there may be a strain of Arab blood from some early generation, but the mothers throughout have been Dravidian, and the class has been maintained in number by wholesale adult conversion'.
  - 51 A number of earlier raids, both by sea and by land, have been recorded; but these hardly amounted to more than frontier incursions. *History and Culture*, 3 (1954), pp. 167-70.
  - 52 Strictly only the 'people of a Book' are eligible to be admitted as *dhimmis*; traditionally the category includes Jews, Christians, Magians and Sabaeans, but not of course Hindus. See also *CHI*, vol. III, pp. 3 and 4.
  - 53 *Tārīkh Yamīnī* in Sir H.M. Elliot and J. Dowson, *The History of India by its own historians*, vol. II (London, 1869), pp. 22, 24. On p. 217 of the same work, we find a similar testimony to the work of a later conqueror, Muhammad Ghorī: 'he purged by his sword the land of Hind from the filth of infidelity and vice, and freed the whole of that country from the thorn of God-plurality, and the impurity of idol-worship, and by his royal vigour and intrepidity, left not one temple standing'.
  - 54 Vividly described in K.M. Munshi, *Somnath: the Shrine Eternal* (1951), pp. 24-8.
  - 55 Sir Wolseley Haig in *CHI*, vol. III, p. 89.
  - 56 For studies of conversion to Islam, see N. Levtzion (ed.), *Conversion to Islam* (New York and London, 1981); and review of this book in *BSOAS* (1981), pp. 162-3.
  - 57 *History of India* (1839; 1921<sup>9</sup>), p. 305.
  - 58 W. Logan in his admirable *Malabar* (2 vols., Madras, 1887); see also E. Thurston, *Castes and Tribes of Southern India* (7 vols., Madras, 1909), vol. IV, p. 459.
  - 59 For a highly competent survey, presenting a rather different point of view, see R. Thapar, *A History of India*, vol. I (1966), pp. 289-320.
  - 60 So F.E. Keay, *Kabir and his Followers*, p. 109. Keay is inclined to accept the idea of Christian influence on Kabir, pp. 169-72.
  - 61 For a recent, but not wholly satisfactory study of Gurū Nānak, see W.H. Mcleod, *Gurū Nānak and the Sikh Religion* (Oxford, 1968). See also a review of this work by S.C.J. Weightman in *BSOAS*, 33 (1970), pp. 412-13.
  - 62 Ibn-Baṭṭūṭa (1304-77) was in India, Ceylon and South-east Asia from 1333 to 1347. His reports are generally recognised to be accurate, though defaced in places by the extravagances of editorial insertions. There is an English translation of the *Rehla* of Ibn-Baṭṭūṭa by M. Husein, in Gaekwad's Oriental Series, 122 (Baroda, 1953).
  - 63 For a valuable study of the Muslims in South-west India, see Geneviève Bouchon: 'Les Musulmans du Kerala à l'époque de la découverte portugaise' in *Mare Luso-Indicum*, 2 (1972/3), pp. 3-59. Reference may also be made to K.V. Krishna Ayyar, *The Zamorins of Calicut* (Calicut, 1938).

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### 4 CHRISTIANS IN THE INDIAN MIDDLE AGE

- 1 The one exception is a visit by an Indian prelate named John, who is alleged to have reached Rome in AD 1122, and to have reported a miracle which occurred in India annually on the feast of St Thomas. See E. Tisserant, *Eastern Christianity in India* (London, 1957), p. 19; and *Analecta Bollandiana*, 66 (1948), pp. 231–75; P. Devos SJ, 'Le miracle posthume de S. Thomas L'Apôtre'. Fr Devos thinks that the story of the miracle may well have arisen in India rather than at Edessa, and that the mysterious visitor may have been Indian, but probably neither patriarch nor archbishop.
- 2 See Yule–Cordier, *Cathay and the Way Thither*, vol. I (London, 1915), pp. 74–80; esp. p. 75 n. 2.
- 3 R.H. Major (ed.), *India in the Fifteenth Century* (London, 1857), p. xv.
- 4 For the abortive and disastrous raid of Reynald of Châtillon in the Red Sea in 1182, see S. Runciman, *A History of the Crusades*, vol. II (Cambridge, 1952), pp. 436–7.
- 5 This account was disinterred from an immense work by Gian Francesco Pagnini del Ventura (4 vols., 1765–6) and printed by Sir Henry Yule in vol. III of *Cathay and the Way Thither* (1914), pp. 137–73.
- 6 This is not of course, the Thāna in India, to which reference will be made later in this chapter.
- 7 Yule, *Cathay*, vol. III, p. 152.
- 8 Yule, *Cathay*, vol. III, pp. 152–3.
- 9 R.H. Major, p. lxxvii.
- 10 See the account of this plate, with photographic reproduction, text and translation in *Epigraphia Indica*, 4 (1896–7), pp. 290–7.
- 11 See *Ind. Antiquary*, 3 (1924), pp. 185–96, 219–29, 244–51, reprinted as *Dissertations on the Copper Plates in the possession of the St Thomas Christians* (Bombay, 1925).
- 12 *Epigraphia Indica* (1900–01), p. 83. Note by E. Kielhorn, who gives the date as AD 1320.
- 13 *Epigraphia Indica*, 4, p. 294.
- 14 A complete translation of the letters will be found in Yule, *Cathay*, vol. III (1914), pp. 45–70. For a new study of medieval travellers, see I. de Rachewitz, *Papal Envoys to the Great Khan* (London, 1971) described by a reviewer in *Bibl. Miss.* (1973), p. 175 as 'reliable scientific and exhaustive'. This work deals with India only incidentally, and adds little to what was already known from other sources.
- 15 *Cathay*, vol. III, p. 45.
- 16 English translation by H. Yule for the Hakluyt Society, Series I (London, 1863).
- 17 *Cathay*, vol. III, p. 76.
- 18 Not certainly identifiable, but perhaps Sufāla near Thāna. See a lengthy note in *Cathay*, vol. II, p. 76 n. 3.
- 19 This name has caused great confusion. Naturally many western writers have supposed this to be Colombo in Ceylon, but this is quite impossible. Almost

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- certainly we are to think of Quilon (Malayālam Kollam) in Kerala, which we know to have been a Christian centre from early times and one of the landfalls for seamen from the Roman Empire. See Yule, *Mirabilia*, pp. xii–xvii; his arguments in favour of Quilon seem to me conclusive. H.H. Rama Varma, the first Prince of Travancore, states that in an inscription published in *Ind. Antiquary*, 2, p. 360, Kollam appears in Sanskrit as Kolambe. If the identification has been correctly made, this would give us an explanation of the variant spelling. But how did this form come to be adopted by the medieval travellers from the west?
- 20 Yule, *Cathay*, vol. II, p. 80, and n. 1. Repeated in *Mirabilia*, p. 23. To whom is Jordanus referring – to Nestorian Christians, to Hindus, or even to Muslims? A number of peoples, notably the Karens in Burma, have had prophecies of the coming of white men from far away.
  - 21 This allegation must be due, I think, to a misunderstanding, of the kind that so easily arises when interpreters do not know much of the language in which they are expected to communicate.
  - 22 Yule, *Mirabilia*, p. 23.
  - 23 *Mirabilia*, p. 24.
  - 24 *Cathay*, vol. III, p. 80.
  - 25 *Mirabilia*, p. vii. The letter bears the odd superscription: *Universis Christianis commorantibus in Molephatam*. This last word I am unable to interpret. It may be that it is due to a mishearing or misreading of Mylapore.
  - 26 Sir Henry Yule has devoted a whole volume, vol. II (1913), of *Cathay and the Way Thither*, to this entertaining and not wholly unreliable writer.
  - 27 The affirmations of Odoric and Fr William are given in full in *Cathay*, vol. II, pp. 266–7. William states that he has taken all things down ‘just as aforementioned Friar Odoric the Bohemian uttered them . . . Nor did he trouble himself to adorn the matter with difficult Latin and conceits of style, but just as the other told his story, so Friar William wrote it, so that all may the more easily understand what is told herein.’ Friar William has told the truth; his Latin is a good deal less than Ciceronian.
  - 28 A vivid account of these doings has been given by John Foster, ‘The Four Martyrs of Thana, 1321’, *IRM*, 45 (1956), 204–8. His account is based on a visit to the actual scene of the martyrdom.
  - 29 On 10 July 1894 the Holy See sanctioned the cult of the Martyrs of Thāna. *Cathay*, vol. II, p. 126 n. 1; and see A.E. Medlycott, *India and the Apostle Thomas*, p. 91 n. 2.
  - 30 *Cathay*, vol. II, pp. 134–6.
  - 31 *Cathay*, vol. II, pp. 141–2.
  - 32 On the reputation and reliability of Marco Polo, see *Cathay*, vol. I, p. 165.
  - 33 Yule–Cordier, *The Book of Ser Marco Polo*, vol. II (1903), p. 331. This brief notice has given rise to endless perplexities. The term Maabar was later confused with Malabar. But Malabar is to the west of Cape Comorin, and the area visited by Marco Polo was indubitably to the east of the Cape. The confusion lasted for a very long time.
  - 34 See *Marco Polo*, vol. II, pp. 332–7.

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- 35 This is the view taken by Sir Henry Yule, *Marco Polo*, vol. II, p. 335.
- 36 *Marco Polo*, vol. II, p. 353.
- 37 *Marco Polo*, vol. II, p. 336.
- 38 *Marco Polo*, vol. II, p. 377 n. 1.
- 39 *Marco Polo*, vol. II, p. 376.
- 40 *Marco Polo*, vol. II, p. 375.
- 41 *Marco Polo*, vol. II, pp. 411–12, Polo seems in point of fact to have confused Madagascar with Mogadishu. The matter is dealt with at length by A.C. Moule in *BSOAS*, 19 (1957), pp. 397–8. He comes down firmly on the side of Mogadishu (Polo may have been written something like ‘Mogdasio’), and his argumentation seems to me convincing. But this confusion does not really affect the point at issue – Polo’s reckonings of distance are often of the nature of hit and miss.
- 42 There is a story of a ship, about the year 1420, being carried away in a westerly and south-westerly direction for forty days, without seeing anything but sky and sea, during which they made to the best of their judgement 2,000 miles. They were fortunate in that they were able to beat their way back to safety in seventy days. *Marco Polo*, vol. II, p. 417 n. 5. The authority for this story is the great map of Fra Mauro (1459).
- 43 *Marco Polo*, vol. II, p. 412. See also p. 415 n. 4.
- 44 I am indebted for this information, and for further startling details of disaster to ships in modern times, to N. Mostert, *Supership* (Penguin ed. 1976), pp. 230–7.
- 45 *Cathay*, vol. III, p. 201.
- 46 *Cathay*, vol. III, pp. 177–268. Full details regarding the strange history of Marignolli’s work are given in this source.
- 47 *Cathay*, vol. III, pp. 216–18.
- 48 It is possible that this is the pillar of which the Dutch *predikant* Philip Baldaeus wrote: ‘Upon the rocks near the sea-shore of Coulam stands a stone pillar erected there, as the inhabitants report, by St Thomas. I saw the pillar in 1662.’ The pillar has since disappeared.
- 49 *Cathay*, vol. III, pp. 257–8.
- 50 *Cathay*, vol. III, p. 258 n. 1.
- 51 R.H. Major, *India in the Fifteenth Century*, gives a complete English translation of the text, with a convenient summary in the Introduction, pp. lix–lxvii.
- 52 R.H. Major, p. 20. *Nepos* in Latin means grandson; *nipote* (Italian) can mean grandson or nephew, more often the latter. In a matrilineal society it is usually the sister’s son who inherits. On polyandry among the Nayars, see E. Thurston, *Castes and Tribes*, vol. V (1909), pp. 307–13. Herbert Wigram, *A Commentary on Malabar Law* (1882), is quoted as saying ‘Polyandry may now be said to be dead.’ Thurston, p. 313.
- 53 Major, *The Travels of Nicolò Conti*, p. 7.
- 54 Poggio (Major, p. 33), tells us that, while he was preparing his record of Nicolò’s conversation, ‘there arrived another person from Upper India towards the north’, who told him that ‘there is a kingdom twenty days journey from Cathay, of which the king and all the inhabitants are Christians, but heretics, being said



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- to be Nestorians'. The unnamed person does not seem to have been a very credible informant, and his information, such as it was, cannot have referred to what we call India today.
- 55 For details see Major, pp. lxxiv–lxxx, and Nikitin, pp. 1–30.
  - 56 Major, p. lxxv.
  - 57 Major, p. lxxviii.
  - 58 Sergei Hackel, in an article 'Apostate or Pioneer? Nikitin and his dialogue in India 1469–1472' in *Eastern Churches Review*, 8 (1976), pp. 162–73, discusses in some detail the experiences of Nikitin in India. See Appendix 7, pp. 397–8.
  - 59 Major, pp. lxxx–lxxxii and Hieronimo, p. 5.
  - 60 Major, 'Journey of Abd-er-Razzak', in *The Travels of Nicolò Conti*, p. 41.
  - 61 For details see chapter 15, pp. 384ff.
  - 62 Major, 'Journey of Abd-er-Razzak', pp. 1–49.
  - 63 In the same year 1487 Bartholomew Dias had set out on the voyage which led him round the Cape of Good Hope and some distance up the coast of southern Africa. C.R. Boxer discusses the reasons for the delay in following up this discovery; Vasco da Gama did not set sail till July 1497. See *The Portuguese Sea-borne Empire* (London, 1969), pp. 33–7.
  - 64 Major, p. lxxxvi.
  - 65 The adventures of Covilham have been recorded by the Conde de Ficalho in a volume entitled *Viagens de Pedro da Covilã* (Lisbon, 1898).

### 5 EUROPE AND ASIA; CONTACT AND CONFLICT

- 1 *CMedH*, vol. VIII (1936), p. 521.
- 2 For an excellent account of the development of new types of ships and of seamanship which made ocean travel possible, see J.H. Parry, *The Age of Reconnaissance* (London, 1963), pp. 53–100. The illustrations in this work are as valuable as the text.
- 3 *The First Voyage of Vasco da Gama 1497–1499* (1898), pp. 5 and 51.
- 4 A rich and ample account of all these developments is to be found in Parry, pp. 100–13.
- 5 On the very real dangers to be encountered in the rounding of Cape Bojador, see C.R. Boxer, *The Portuguese Sea-borne Empire* (London, 1969), p. 26.
- 6 R.H. Major, *Prince Henry the Navigator* (London, 1868), pp. 99–101, based on Dr Pertz: 'Der älteste Versuch zur Entdeckung des Seeweges nach Ostindien', a report presented to the Royal Academy of Sciences of Munich on 28 March 1859, from the public annals of the city of Genoa.
- 7 For details, see J. Ure, *Prince Henry the Navigator* (London, 1977), pp. 68–71.
- 8 This is what happened in 1500 to Pedro Alvares Cabral, who inadvertently made the first European landing on the coast of Brazil.
- 9 R.S. Whiteway, in *The Rise of Portuguese Power in India 1457–1550* (London, 1899), pp. 7–8, gives a minutely accurate account of all these exactions. A great deal of light has been thrown on the whole of this subject in J. Innes Miller, *The Spice Trade of the Roman Empire 29BC to AD641* (Oxford, 1969).

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- 10 Translation with valuable notes and studies by E.G. Ravenstein, published by the Hakluyt Society in 1898. Valuable also is the translation of *The Three Voyages of Vasco da Gama, according to Correa* (Hakluyt Society, 1869), by Lord Stanley of Alderley, 'with numerous foot-notes indicating the instances in which Correa differs from Barros, Goes, Castanheda and other historians, and from the poetical account of the voyage presented in the *Lusiadas* of Camões'.
- 11 The explorers had met a number of the inhabitants at various points along the coast of South Africa. From the descriptions given, these seem to have been Bushmen or Hottentots. Friendly relationships were established with them; the Portuguese appreciated especially the fat cattle which they were able to purchase from them.
- 12 This is almost certainly a mistake, arising from the strange idea that anyone in the East who was not a Muslim would be a Christian. The Thomas Christians were great traders and merchants; but I have found nothing in the sources to suggest that they had ships of their own. They stayed at home and let others venture on the seas.
- 13 This is the form in which the title occurs in almost all our sources. The *New CMH*, vol. II, p. 594 n. 1 connects it with the sea; 'The title samuri derived from Malayalam tāmāturī or tāmūrī, meaning sea-king.' This cannot be said to be certain.
- 14 *The First Voyage*, p. 48.
- 15 Two of those frequently referred to were the Alexandrian Jew turned Christian, Gaspar, who appears from time to time in the records as 'Gaspar de las Indias'; and Monçaide, a 'Moor', who was believed to have been born in Seville but captured by Muslims at the age of five. He accompanied da Gama on his return voyage to Spain where he was baptised. See *The First Voyage*, Appendix E, pp. 179–80: 'Muster Roll of Vasco da Gama's Fleet'.
- 16 *The First Voyage*, pp. 52–5.
- 17 Damião de Goes, *Chronica do felicissimo rey Dom Manoel*, Chap. 40. The address *Maria, Maria* suggests that the sailors had entered a shrine of Māriamma, the goddess of smallpox; but it is unlikely that twice-born attendants wearing the sacred thread would be found in a shrine of that kind.
- 18 For a list of products of India brought to Europe see F.C. Danvers, *The Portuguese in India*, vol. I (New York, 1894, 1966<sup>2</sup>), pp. 73–4.
- 19 Danvers gives the number as fifty-three (vol. I, p. 70). Danvers also gives a quite horrifying account of atrocities practised by Vasco da Gama on his second voyage of 1502 (p. 85).
- 20 See Appendix 8, for the instructions of the king of Portugal on warfare with the Muslims. It is to be noted, however, that in a recent study of the period Geneviève Bouchon rejects the picture of Portuguese brutality given by almost all English writers on the subject, and roundly asserts that the Portuguese did no more than adopt the customs of warfare which were current in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. 'Les Musulmans de Kérala à l'époque de la découverte portugaise', in *Mare Luso-Indicum*, 2 (1972), pp. 3–59. The writer notes the distinction drawn by the Portuguese between the Muslims from Mecca and the Moplahs long indigenised in India. See also p. 153.

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- 21 S.F. Dale, *Islamic Society on the South-Asian Frontier* (Oxford, 1980), contains a good account of the social structure of Kerala, of the specific situation of the (Muslim) Māpillas, and of their relations with the Portuguese in the sixteenth century and after.
- 22 It should be noted that Albuquerque's predecessor as governor, Don Francisco de Almeida, held a diametrically opposite point of view. See *New CMH*, vol. II, p. 600.
- 23 It is stated that, in 1510, no less than 450 women of this type were baptised and married to Portuguese men. Danvers, vol. I, p. 217.
- 24 From an early date there were in Goa many slaves brought over from Moçambique; but the Portuguese seem to have used the term 'Negress', improperly, also of the dark-skinned Dravidian women. C.R. Boxer, *Race Relations in the Portuguese Colonial Empire 1415-1825* (Oxford, 1963), pp. 64-5 and p. 65 n. 1.
- 25 *New CMH*, vol. II, p. 600.
- 26 As the British were later to discover, opium fulfils exactly all the requirements.
- 27 Reliable reports indicate that Vijayanagar had taken as many as 1,500 Arabian cavalry horses in a single year, all imported through Goa. *New CMH*, vol. III, p. 540.
- 28 Danvers, vol. I, p. 331. As this is based on Albuquerque's own account, it is possible that it is a little less than impartial.
- 29 Claudius Buchanan, *Christian Researches in Asia* (Cambridge, 1811), p. 133.
- 30 For a 'List of Viceroys, Governors, etc of Portuguese India' see Danvers, Appendix B (vol. II, pp. 487-92). Appendix C 'Heroes of the Epic Period' (pp. 493-527), and Appendix D 'Names of Places' (pp. 528-36), with Portuguese and modern spelling, will also be found useful.
- 31 Quoted, though in paraphrase rather than translation, in C.R. Boxer, *Race Relations*, p. 61, from da Silva Rêgo, *Doc.* (Lisbon, 1948-58), vol. VII, p. 37.
- 32 See C. Mercês de Melo, *The Recruitment and Formation of the Native Clergy in India* (Lisbon, 1955), p. 247 n. 1.
- 33 In an interesting note, C.R. Boxer points out that the term should properly be used only of the inhabitants of Canara, who are for the most part Dravidian in race and speech, whereas the inhabitants of Goa 'geographically are Konkani-Marathi, ethnically are Indo-Aryan, and glotologically are Indo-European', *Race Relations*, pp. 84-5. First in rank came the Brāhmins, then the Chardos, perhaps Kṣatriyas; below them the Sūdras, cultivators of the soil, next the Curumbins, of poor or menial status, and finally the Farazes, who did the most menial tasks of all. In each case the forms used in Portuguese works are given.
- 34 A useful summary of the 'Rules and Customs of the Village Headmen and cultivators of the Island of Goa' is to be found in R.S. Whiteway, pp. 218-20.
- 35 Whiteway, p. 172.
- 36 'A light galley; a vessel propelled by both sails and oars' (OED).
- 37 On *The Memoirs of Bābur*, see Bibliography.
- 38 E. Denison Ross in *CHI*, vol. IV, p. 20.
- 39 The rulers referred to are the Lodīs in Delhi; Muhammad Muzaffar in Gujarāt;

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- the Bahmanīs in the Deccan; Mahmūd Khaljī in Mālwa; Nusrat Shāh in Bengal; and the two Hindus, the king of Vijayanagar, and Rānā Sanga in Chitor. *CHI*, vol. IV, p. 9.
- 40 The extent of the role played by artillery in the decisive battle of Panīpat is a matter of some controversy; it seems that it was at least considerable. This is the view taken by Dr R.C. Majumdar, editor of *The History and Culture of the Indian People* (vol. VII, pp. 41–3), as against the author of the chapter on Bābur, Dr S. Roy (pp. 25–40).
- 41 *The Memoirs of Bābur* (1922), p. 474.
- 42 *Memoirs*, pp. 518–19.
- 43 *Memoirs*, pp. 519–20.
- 44 Mountstuart Elphinstone, *The History of India* (1911<sup>9</sup>), p. 429.
- 45 The map in Sewell's *Forgotten Empire* (London, 1900) shows the kingdom as covering the whole of India south of the Tungabhadra and Kistna rivers, and as far as Cape Comorin. But this is hardly accurate; the power of Vijayanagar was never felt in the extreme south of the country, though claims to dominion in that area were no doubt made.
- 46 Part of the value of Sewell's book lies in the fact that he has given a complete English translation of the narrations, based on personal experiences, of Dominic Pires (1520–2) and of Ferdinand Nuniz (1535–7). Both of these give evidence of the extent of religious toleration observed in Vijayanagar.
- 47 R. Sewell, *A Forgotten Empire: (Vijayanagar) A Contribution to the History of India* (London: Swan & Co, 1900; now available in the reprint of 1972, I.U.P., Shannon).
- 48 'Akbar had great faith in his own powers of discerning character, and he appears to have acted uniformly on his own judgment. In the same way there were no rules regarding promotion; an officer might be advanced or degraded or dismissed at the emperor's pleasure.' W.H. Moreland, *India at the Death of Akbar* (London: Macmillan, 1920), p. 69.
- 49 Professor H. Blochmann made a careful translation from Persian of a large part of the *Āīn-i-Akbarī*, one of our chief sources for the reign of Akbar, and unique in the minute detail in which it records the administration of his empire. This was published in Calcutta in 1873. Blochmann was prevented by his death in 1878 from completing the work; the remaining volumes were contributed by Colonel H.S. Jarrett.
- 50 Moreland, p. 70.
- 51 This seems not to have been the case in the Indian systems of administration which preceded those of the Mughuls.
- 52 Quoted, without reference, by Moreland, p. 268.
- 53 *Early Travels in India*, ed. Sir W. Foster (Oxford, 1921), p. 184.
- 54 S. Roy in *History and Culture*, 8 (1974), pp. 113–14.
- 55 Some years later, before his faith in Islam finally faded out, Akbar did form a quickly abandoned plan to make the pilgrimage to Mecca.
- 56 Quoted in *CHI*, vol. IV, p. 105. This is the writer whom Prof. Blochmann politely describes: 'the charge of flattery and even of wilful concealment of facts

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- damaging to the reputation of his master is absolutely unfounded . . . We shall find that while he praises, he does so infinitely less, and with much more dignity and grace, than any other Indian historian or poet', *Ā'in-i-Akbarī*, vol. 1 (1873), p. vi.
- 57 Akbar would probably have agreed with the view expressed by Sultan Bahādur of Gujarāt that 'wars by sea are merchants' affairs, and of no concern to the prestige of kings', M.N. Pearson, *Merchants and Rulers in Gujarat* (Berkeley, 1976), p. 91. 'It is clear that the Portuguese did not press their demands to a degree which would have provoked concerted and sustained opposition.' S. Digby, *BSOAS*, 11, 2 (1977), 409 (a review of Pearson's book, as above). See also careful criticisms of this work by G. Bouchon: 'Pour une histoire du Gujarāt du XV<sup>e</sup> au XVII<sup>e</sup> Siècle', in *Mare Luso-Indicum*, 4 (1980), pp. 150-4. John Fryer tells us that Aurungzib 'styles the Christians Lions of the Sea; saying that God has allotted that Unstable Element for their Rule'. *East India and Persia*, vol. 1 (Reprint, London, 1909-15), p. 302.
- 58 Newbery had already made an adventurous journey in which he reached the Portuguese fort of Ormuz at the mouth of the Persian Gulf.
- 59 'Her husband's to Aleppo gone, master of the *Tyger*.' Shakespeare, *Macbeth*, Act 1 Scene iii. The narrative of Ralph Fitch has been admirably edited and annotated by Sir W. Foster, *Early Travels in India 1583-1619* (1921), pp. 1-47.
- 60 Linschoten's *Voyages*, vol. II (Hakluyt Society edition), pp. 158-67, gives further most interesting details of the sojourn of the Englishmen in Goa.
- 61 Details in Foster, pp. 6-7.
- 62 *CHI*, vol. v (1929), p. 29.
- 63 Read 'impediment'. The English translator is not always accurate. See *The Voyage of John Huyghen van Linschoten to the East Indies*, ed. A.C. Burnell (1885), an excellent and careful edition of a classic by a great scholar. The quotation is from vol. 1, p. 112.
- 64 Linschoten's information was not quite accurate. By the date of the publication of the volume, the Portuguese were already in Java.
- 65 Barker's account of this first voyage is to be found in *The Voyages of Sir James Lancaster Kt to the East Indies*, ed. Clements R. Markham (1877), pp. 1-24.
- 66 *The Voyages of Sir James Lancaster Kt*, p. 57.
- 67 The circumstances surrounding the granting of the Charter are well set out in J. Bruce, *Annals of the Honourable East India Company*, vol. 1 (London, 1810), pp. 109-51.
- 6 BEGINNINGS OF MISSION
- 1 The full text of all these documents will be found well set forth in *Bullarium Patronatus Portugalliae Regum* (4 vols., Lisbon, 1866-73). For the declaration of Martin V, see *Bull.*, vol. 1, pp. 9-10. See also Appendices 9-13.
- 2 The pope seems to have shared the illusion that there were Christian countries in the East. See A. Jann, *Die katholischen Missionen in Indien, China and Japan* (Paderborn, 1915), pp. 37-8.

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- 3 The Latin text is given in Jann, pp. 39–40.
- 4 A further confirmation of all the privileges accorded to the Portuguese crown was declared by Pope Leo X in the bull *Dum fidei constantiam* of 7 June 1514, and in a further declaration on 3 November of the same year.
- 5 A. da Silva Rêgo, *Missões* (Lisbon, 1949), p. 273, tells us that de Sousa was later vicar general, and a constant companion of da Gama on his later voyages. The other two were, according to Gaspar Correa, *Lendas* (Lisbon, 1858–61), vol. 1, p. 394, Fr Rodrigo, who was left behind at Cochin, and Fr John de Rosario, who died at Ormuz on his way to Persia as ambassador.
- 6 The letter is printed, in Portuguese, in da Silva Rêgo, *Documentação*, vol. 1 (Lisbon, 1947), pp. 74–5. The situation was of course complicated by the fact that the Muslims, of whom there were quite a number in the neighbourhood of Cochin, do eat beef; the Christians were not the first to commit the crime, which has been the cause of endless riots through the centuries in India.
- 7 This suggests that the Thomas Christians had at that time no priests. But this does not seem to have been the case. It seems more likely that these Christians had maintained the very ancient custom that only the bishop baptised; in periods when there was no bishop no baptisms would take place. A Western priest was, of course, not bound by this rule.
- 8 So M. Müllbauer, *Geschichte der katholischen Missionen in Ostindien* (Freiburg i. B., 1852), p. 48. See *Bull.*, vol. 1, 57 for the brief of Alexander VI *Cum sicut majestatis* of 26 March 1500.
- 9 See da Silva Rêgo, *Missões*, p. 259.
- 10 Letter dated 10 January 1522; SR, *Doc.*, vol. 1, pp. 436–49.
- 11 Great obscurity still clings to the whole subject. For various views, see the article of Fr B.M. Biermann OP, ‘Der erste Bischof in Ost-Indien: Fray Duarte Nunes OP’, *NZM*, 9 (1953), 81–90. Fr Biermann is of the opinion that there were in reality only two bishops of the ring – Duarte Nunes (1520–4) and Fernando Vaqueiro OFM (1531–5). The latter is credited with having been the first bishop to ordain Indians to the priesthood. Biermann is prepared to admit the possibility that there may have been a third bishop, D. Martinho, mentioned by Correa, about 1523. Fr A. Meersman OFM (‘The First Latin Bishops of the Portuguese period in India’, *NZM*, 20 (1964), 179–83) is prepared to recognise only two bishops, Nunes and Vaqueiro. He inclines to identify Don Martinho, perhaps correctly, with Duarte Nunes. The addition of a fourth name to the list seems to be due only to misunderstanding.
- 12 SR, *Doc.*, vol. 1, pp. 452–3, letter of 12 January 1522.
- 13 SR, *Doc.*, vol. 11, pp. 19–24, letter of 28 December 1523.
- 14 SR, *Doc.*, vol. 1, p. 440, letter of 10 January 1522.
- 15 Note that the bishop never signs his name; he concludes his letters only with his title ‘Dumensis’. This has contributed not a little to the difficulty of identifying him with certainty. His personal name appears to have been Andrew Torquemada.
- 16 SR, *Doc.*, vol. 1, pp. 453, 459–62. We are astonished here as in many other contexts at the almost excessive care which was taken even in the remotest

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- regions to make sure that everything was done and recorded in regular and proper order.
- 17 This is not the San Tomé (Mylapore) in India, which was constituted a diocese on 6 January 1606.
  - 18 Not all of these appointments were made, partly because of the lack of adequate personnel, partly because even the generous revenues of the diocese would not extend so far.
  - 19 The Act of the consecration of Albuquerque may be found in SR, *Doc.*, vol. II, pp. 262–4.
  - 20 On his early years see S. Bivia OFM, 'El primer obispo de la India Frey Juan Albuquerque', in *Missiones Franciscanas*, 39 (1955), 130–6.
  - 21 *Lex. f. Theologie u. Kirche* s.v. gives the date of his birth as 1478. There is a useful section on Albuquerque in A. Meersman OFM, *The Friars' Mission* (Karachi, 1943), pp. 144–7, where two letters of Francis Xavier relating to the bishop are printed in full (in Eng. trans.). Albuquerque received from his clergy the somewhat backhanded compliment that the fact that he was a Spaniard did not mean that he was rough! Correa, *Lendas*, vol. IV, p. 10.
  - 22 Correa, *Lendas*, vol. IV, pp. 88–9, for the ceremonies attendant on his installation.
  - 23 One of the first tasks that Albuquerque had to attend to was to ensure that the parish priest of St Catherine's did not become dean of the cathedral, a post for which he was massively unsuited. Amusing details of the measure of his incompetence are given in the account in SR, *Doc.*, vol. II, pp. 269–90.
  - 24 SR, *Doc.*, vol. I, pp. 232–9. The women belonged to an interesting variety of castes, including Brāhmins.
  - 25 SR, *Missiões*, p. 117.
  - 26 SR, *Doc.*, vol. I, pp. 228–31; letter of 20 December 1514.
  - 27 A full account of Henry, who became bishop of Ceuta on 30 January 1506, is given by Fr F. Felix Lopes OFM in *Studia*, 37 (Lisbon, 1973), 7–119.
  - 28 Letter of Albuquerque, 22 December 1522, printed in SR, *Doc.*, vol. I, p. 118.
  - 29 Letter of the governor Martin Affonso de Sousa to the king, 23 December 1542, printed in SR, *Doc.*, vol. II, p. 217.
  - 30 A. Hounder SJ, *Der einheimische Klerus in den Heidenländern* (Freiburg. i. B., 1909), p. 57.
  - 31 Francis Gonzago OFM, *De Origine Seraphicae Religionis Franciscanae* (Rome, 1587), p. 1204.
  - 32 SR, *Doc.*, vol. I, p. 121.
  - 33 *Missiões*, pp. 240–2.
  - 34 C.R. Boxer, *Fidalgos in the Far East* (1948), p. 217. There was more charitable activity, though perhaps not so well organised, in the colonies of other powers than Boxer has allowed for. There is a full-scale history of the *Misericórdia* – J.F. Ferreira-Martins, *Historia da Misericórdia da Goa* (2 vols., Nova Goa, 1910–12).
  - 35 Our chief authority for these events is Gaspar Correa, *Lendas*, vol. II, pp. 537–8. Ordinarily the secular clergy alone would have had the right to administer the sacraments in the city.

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- 36 SR, *Doc.*, vol. II, pp. 213–15, letter of 8 November 1532.
- 37 On the admission of *mestiços*, see A. Meersman OFM, *The Ancient Franciscan Provinces in India 1500–1835* (Bangalore, 1971), pp. 37–40. Note that under Pope Gregory XIII (1572–85) it was laid down that descendants of Muslims were not to be ordained, unless their families had been Christians for four generations.
- 38 The text reads *Bryvia*, which da Silva Rêgo interprets, probably correctly, as ‘Bible’.
- 39 SR, *Doc.*, vol. I, pp. 336–9.
- 40 The name of this admirable man keeps cropping up in connection with every good work, usually in highly laudatory terms. For instance in a letter of 1 January 1543, relating to the unification of the hospital with the *Misericórdia*, it is stated that ‘Cosme Anes, secretary to the treasury, undertook the responsibility for this work, and with great care and labour brought it all to a state of perfection’, SR, *Doc.*, vol. II, pp. 325–6.
- 41 SR, *Doc.*, vol. II, pp. 306–8. The word rendered ‘protector’ is almost illegible in the text. Da Silva Rêgo suggests that it should perhaps be read *provedor*, provider. Confraternities played an important part in the development of Christianity in Goa. For a full study, see the work of L. da Rocha, *As Confrarias de Goa (Séculos XVI–XX)* (Lisbon, 1973), largely based on da Silva Rêgo, *Documentação* and J. Wicki SJ, *Documenta Indica*. The author is critical of the confraternities, especially of their exclusivism, sometimes local, but often based, in the Indian confraternities, on caste distinction.
- 42 SR, *Missões*, p. 253.
- 43 Some doubt exists as to the part played by the Franciscans. Paulo de Trindade, *Conquista Espiritual do Oriente*, vol. I (Lisbon, 1962–7), p. 266 affirms that they continued teaching until they were able to hand over the work to the Jesuits. It is not certain that he was right. The same Paulo gave the first lecture, on 13 July 1618, at the newly founded Franciscan College of St Bonaventure in Goa.
- 44 SR, *Doc.*, vol. I, pp. 240–3. Letter dated 20 December 1514.
- 45 Is this an error for Tiyas, an alternative name for the caste more generally known as Izhavas? ‘Macuas’ is the incorrect form, generally used by Portuguese, for Mukkuvas, the fisher caste of the west coast.
- 46 SR, *Doc.*, vol. II, pp. 14–17.
- 47 *ICHR*, 3 (1969), 103–14.
- 48 Barros, *de Asia*, vol. I, 9, I, p. 303.
- 49 *ICHR*, 3, 111.
- 50 See da Silva Rêgo, *Missões*, p. 160 n. 114, with a long quotation from Gaspar Correa, *Lendas*, vol. II, pp. 930–1, in which details of the case are given.
- 51 *Missões*, p. 515.
- 52 *Missões*, p. 514.
- 53 For Portuguese attempts to suppress the Konkani language, see A.K. Priolkar *The Printing Press in India* (Bombay, 1958), pp. 141–238.
- 54 For details see A. Meersman OFM, pp. 78–88.
- 55 This system was eventually brought to an end by the vicar general, and a fixed salary was assigned to the watchful dragon, in place of the income from the fines.



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- 56 SR, *Doc.*, vol. 1, p. 341.
- 57 A way out was in some places sought by providing a list of sins written up in large letters. The penitent would then point to that or those of which he or she admitted guilt – hardly a satisfactory method of making or hearing confessions.
- 58 SR, *Doc.*, vol. 1, p. 340.
- 59 SR, *Doc.*, vol. 1, p. 343. Correct information about the Izhavas is given in the *Book of Duarte Barbosa*, vol. II (1921), pp. 58–9, with notes. See the full account given in E. Thurston, *Castes and Tribes of southern India*, vol. II (Madras, 1909), pp. 392–417, s.v. *Izhavas*; and also L.K. Ananta Krishna Iyer, 'The Cochin Castes and Tribes', vol. 1 (1909), pp. 277–342. A useful contemporary study is C.K. Pullapilly, 'The Izhavas of Kerala and their Historic Struggle for Acceptance in the Hindu Society', in *Religion and Social Conflict in South Asia*, ed. B.L. Smith (Leiden, 1976), pp. 24–46.
- 60 SR, *Doc.*, vol. 1, p. 178. Letter of 1 January 1513.
- 61 This work, which was published in English translation by the Hakluyt Society in 1944, appears from internal evidence to have been written before the death of Albuquerque on 16 December 1515.
- 62 *The Suma Oriental of Tomé Pires*, vol. 1 (London: Hakluyt Society, 1944), pp. 58–9. Pires was sent to China as ambassador, and seems to have died there about 1540. His book is circumstantial and seems to be reliable.
- 63 And also produced endless perplexities for the historian. In a great many cases it is hard to be sure whether the person referred to is Portuguese or *mestiço* or pure Indian. See an interesting study by Fr G. Schurhammer SJ, on 'Doppelgänger in the Portuguese East', in *Gesammelte Studien*, 'Orientalia' (1963), pp. 121–47.
- 64 See A. D'Costa SJ, *The Christianisation of the Goa Islands 1510–1567* (Bombay, 1965), p. 29.
- 65 The list given by A.K. Priolkar, in *The Goa Inquisition* (Bombay, 1961), pp. 69–70, from the work of Francis Paes, gives considerably more than a hundred; but some of these were in territories which in 1543 had not yet been acquired by Portugal.
- 66 SR, *Doc.*, vol. II, p. 343.
- 67 *Lendas*, vol. IV.1.290, quoted by A. D'Costa, p. 31 and n. 13, who accepts the account as reliable, though raising a number of problems. We have many accounts of the destruction of temples by Hindus who had become Christians; I do not recall any evidence as to Hindus who continued to be Hindus having carried out such destruction.
- 68 DI, 1, p. 45.
- 69 Printed at length in SR, *Doc.*, vol. II, pp. 293–305, together with a further narrative explaining some of the legal difficulties. See also a detailed and accurate study by A. D'Costa SJ, 'The demolition of the temples in the Islands of Goa in 1540 and the disposal of the temple lands', *NZM*, 18 (1962), 161–76.
- 70 There is a full and fascinating study of 'Crisna' in S.S. Pissurlenca, *Arquivo Historico do Estado da India*, vol. II, 'Agentes da Diplomacia Portuguesa na India' (Bastora-Goa, 1952), pp. 1–21. See also A.L. Priolkar, *Inquisition*, p. 71; and DI, 1, pp. 792–3.
- 71 Castello-Branco seems to have been making use of the fiction according to

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- which the *khushi-vrat*, the sum paid in past times to the Hindu rulers, was a voluntary contribution on the part of the subjects.
- 72 The various coinages current in the sixteenth century are a subject of great perplexity to the modern reader. A good account of them is given by R.S. Whiteway, *The Rise of Portuguese Power in India* (London, 1899), p. 69. See also A. D'Costa, pp. 32-3. It is hardly possible even to suggest what the value of this sum might be in modern terms; but clearly it was considerable in those days.
- 73 SR, *Doc.*, vol. II, p. 301.
- 74 SR, *Doc.*, vol. II, p. 300.
- 75 Details in A. D'Costa, pp. 32-3; and in the article referred to in n. 69 above, p. 175. In March 1569 King Sebastian issued a decree relating to the temple lands of Salsette and Bardez, in which he states that 'the first and chief purpose of the income and properties of the temples . . . ought to be the spiritual good of the inhabitants of those places, whose ancestors donated them'.

### 7 THE JESUITS AND THE INDIAN CHURCH

- 1 'The New Orders', in *New CMH*, vol. II, pp. 275-300. This excellent study contains everything necessary for an understanding of the background of the first Jesuit mission in India.
- 2 The rather puzzling name is derived from the Latin form of the name Chiete, the bishop of which, Gian Pietro Caraffa, later Pope Paul IV, was one of the founders of the order. This 'restless, fiery, yet learned bishop' (Evennett, p. 286) resigned his bishopric on the formation of the Order of Theatines in 1524.
- 3 Evennett, p. 286.
- 4 Evennett, p. 297.
- 5 Evennett, p. 294.
- 6 Fr G. Schurhammer SJ mentions that, in the Roman archives of the society, the Goa letters alone fill forty-five volumes.
- 7 For John Polanco's twenty reasons for writing good and careful letters, see *Monumenta Ignatiana, Series Prima, I* (Madrid, 1903-11), pp. 536-41; and also J. Correia-Afonso SJ, *Jesuit Letters and Indian History* (Bombay, 1969<sup>2</sup>) pp. 3-4.
- 8 *Documenta Indica*, 2 ed. J. Wicki SJ, p. 489. This annual letter actually fills forty-six pages of print, DI, 2, pp. 445-91.
- 9 The early years of Xavier are comprehensively treated in G. Schurhammer, *Francis Xavier*, vol. I (Eng. trans. 1973).
- 10 *Monumenta Xaveriana* (Madrid, 1899-1912), vol. II, p. 896. For further evidence as to the language spoken by Xavier, see Appendix 15.
- 11 J. Brodrick, *St Francis Xavier* (London, 1952), p. 43 n. 1.
- 12 The actual terms of the bull appointing him are 'Apostolic Nuncio to the islands of the Red Sea, the Persian Gulf and the Indian Ocean, as well as to the provinces and places of India this side of the Ganges, and beyond the promontory called the Cape of Good Hope.'
- 13 *Historia del principio y progreso de la Compañia de Jesús en las Indias Orientales 1542-64*, ed. J. Wicki SJ (Rome, 1944), pp. 3-264.

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- 14 *Historia*, p. 18.
- 15 Ships could not ordinarily leave Goa during the south-west monsoon; this explains the interval of more than four months between his arrival and the writing of the letter.
- 16 Forty in 1548; exactly how many there were in 1542 our authorities do not seem to relate.
- 17 *Epistolae S. Francisci Xaverii Aliaque eius Scripta*, ed. G. Schurhammer SJ and J. Wicki SJ (Rome, 1944-5), vol. I, pp. 121-2.
- 18 G. Schurhammer, *Francis Xavier*, vol. II (Eng. trans. Rome, 1977), pp. 154-6, based on Teixeira, p. 842: *EX*, vol. II, p. 455. Xavier always insisted on this attitude of respect for the bishop, and this helped to ease relationships between bishops and Jesuits, which in other areas were not always so cordial.
- 19 G. Schurhammer, vol. II (Eng. trans.) p. 157 n. 35, basing himself on Correa, *Lendas* (Lisbon, 1858-61), vol. IV, p. 290, states firmly that Vaz was a layman and not a priest. This is surprising, but Schurhammer is not often mistaken in his affirmations.
- 20 In a document of the year 1560, it is stated that the population includes 'Chaldaeans, Hebrews, Greeks, Armenians, Janissaries, Russians, Arabs, Persians, Moors, Jews, Brahmans, Yogis, Sannyāsis, Fartakis, Nubians, Khorassanians, Moguls, Gujaratis, Dekhanis, Canarim, Kanarese, Malabaris, Singhalese, Malays, Peguans, Bengalis, Kaffirs, Japanese, Chinese, Malucos, Pathans, Makassars and many others', *DI*, 4, pp. 837-8.
- 21 Letter of 20 September 1542 to the brethren at Rome; *EX*, vol. I, p. 126. Note that all these patients would be wholly or in part Portuguese, and therefore able to understand what Xavier had to say to them.
- 22 *Mon. Xav.*, vol. II, pp. 812ff.
- 23 The not always reverent pen of Fr Brodrick has in this case perhaps found the right phrase: 'the combined muffin-man and Pied Piper'.
- 24 A detailed account of all this is in Schurhammer, vol. II (Eng. trans.), pp. 218-24.
- 25 'Without any mention of God', says *DI*, 3, p. 336.
- 26 Schurhammer, vol. II (Eng. trans.), pp. 226-9. This is a composite account but probably not far from the truth.
- 27 *EX*, vol. I, pp. 132-3.
- 28 *EX*, vol. I, p. 134. In 'Zum Humanismus im Portugiesisch-Indien des 16 Jahrhunderts' (originally in *Anal. Gregoriana*, 70 (1954), 193-246, now reprinted in *Missionskirche im Orient* (1976), 49-81), Fr J. Wicki SJ has given something like a continuous history of the college of St Paul till nearly the end of the sixteenth century.
- 29 I have generally used the more familiar term, and hope that this may not be found offensive by readers who are members of that community.
- 30 *EX*, vol. I, pp. 126-7, letter of 20 September 1542. It is commonly said that Xavier's helpers, Gaspar and Emmanuel, and one unnamed, were Paravas from Tuticorin, and Ep. 19 (*EX*, vol. I, p. 147) does suggest this. But almost certainly they were Malayalis from the neighbourhood of Cochin. This is borne out by Ep. 45 of 18 December 1544, in which Xavier states that the

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- bishop has ordained Manuel and Gaspar (to the priesthood) 'who are in Cochín, in order to bring forth fruit there'. If Xavier had had reasonably well educated Tamil helpers he should not have experienced as much difficulty as he did in translating creed and prayers into Tamil, and the results should have been better. There is no reference in the documents to the young men having found friends and relations in the places which they visited.
- 31 The Tamil word means literally 'trees tied together', and this is just what they are; they do not try to keep the sea out, but let it in and out again.
- 32 A modern study of the Pearl Fishery is S. Arunachalam, *History of the Pearl Fishery on the Tamil Coast* (Annamalai Nagar, 1952).
- 33 Fr Brodrick, p. 122, refers to the absurd report sent by Michael Vaz to the pope to the effect that half a million new Christians had been added to the church. He estimates the number at 20,000. I think that this is still too high. But no accurate figures can be expected from the contemporary records.
- 34 The Franciscans claimed that they had visited the Paravas and instructed them, but this claim does not seem to be supported by any evidence. All these complicated events have been worked out in detail by Schurhammer, 'Die Bekehrung der Parava, 1535-1537', first published in *AHSI*, 4 (1935) and reprinted in 'Orientalia' (1963), pp. 215-54.
- 35 *EX*, vol. 1, p. 148.
- 36 Only in part. Much of this valuable soil is carried far out to sea.
- 37 The palmyra (*Borassus flabelliformis*; the English name is a corruption of the Tamil *panaimaram*) is not a palm, though it looks rather like one. Though not beautiful, every part of this remarkable tree can be turned to the service of the human race. Among other things, it produces the sweet juice from which most of the local sugar is made, but which when allowed to ferment threatens the sobriety of the local inhabitants.
- 38 At one point Fr Brodrick, p. 220, depicts the saint on one of his journeys as staggering painfully over the burning sandhills. I fancy Fr Schurhammer derived a little malicious pleasure from pointing out that Xavier, like any sensible person, actually went by boat.
- 39 *EX*, vol. 1, pp. 147-8, letter of 28 October 1542. Xavier is here summarising what took place on a number of visits. Some of the boys may have picked up a few words of Portuguese; but the difficulty of communication remained immense during the whole period of his ministry on the Coast.
- 40 Letter of 15 January 1544, *EX*, vol. 1, pp. 162-4.
- 41 *EX*, vol. 1, p. 166.
- 42 *EX*, vol. 1, pp. 164-5.
- 43 This great temple, like that of Herod, has been forty and six years in building, or rather rebuilding; I do not know whether it is even now completed. See Schurhammer, vol. II (Eng. trans.), pp. 296-7.
- 44 *EX*, vol. 1, pp. 170-1.
- 45 Presumably Sanskrit; but Xavier does not give a name to this esoteric form of speech.
- 46 See Schurhammer, vol. II (Eng. trans.), pp. 344-6, where extensive references to the sources on which his account is based are supplied.

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- 47 *EX*, vol. 1, p. 245.
- 48 *DI*, 1, p. 138; and see n. 35 for an important reference. Xavier conceived a great affection for his feckless namesake and brother. In the course of a year he wrote to him no less than twenty-six letters, some trivial, others containing information of the greatest value; these enable us to follow in close detail the events of the perplexing year 1544. Mansilhas died in Cochin in 1565. At that time he handed the letters over to the Jesuits, and copies of them have been preserved, though the originals seem to have been destroyed when the Dutch captured Cochin in 1663. Eventually, Mansilhas had to be dismissed from the Society of Jesus for disobedience – he had been ordered to go to the Moluccas, but had failed to obey the order. See *EX*, vol. 11, p. 79, and Schurhammer, vol. 111 (Eng. trans.), p. 286 with nn. 18 and 21. Schurhammer remarks that ‘though he had been dismissed by Xavier in the year 1548, he remained deeply attached to the society, and on his deathbed wished to be cared for by Fathers of the society only’, *EX*, vol. 1, p. 179. See Schurhammer, vol. 11 (Eng. trans.), p. 427 n. 17.
- 49 The Portuguese name gives no clue as to his origin. Schurhammer states that he was of Malabar and came probably from Cochin, vol. 11 (Eng. trans.), p. 402 n. 179. Coelho remains a rather dim figure.
- 50 Sacristans is perhaps a rather grand term for the *kanakkappillaimar*, as at that time there were no churches on the Coast, except one church built in Tuticorin for the Portuguese. The first stone church on the Coast was almost certainly the chapel erected at Manappādu in 1582. In 1591 the nāyak of Mathurai, in token of his desire for peace, agreed to permit the building of stone churches. See Schurhammer, vol. 11 (Eng. trans.), pp. 341–2, and nn. 431–3, quoting a letter of Fr Peter Martins, now in the archives of the Society in Rome. This permission took effect. A report of the year 1644 speaks of twenty churches in villages of the Paravas.
- 51 The correct form is *paṭṭankatti*, one on whom dignity has been conferred. Xavier several times uses the Portuguese term *meirinho*, bailiff. I do not think that the translation given by Schurhammer, *Polizist*, is defensible.
- 52 ‘Inquitriberim and Beteperumal, Chēra and Paṇḍiya kings in Southern India 1544’, in *Journal of the Bombay Historical Society* (1930), 1–40; reprinted in ‘Orientalia’ (1963), pp. 263–89. See also *EX*, vol. 1, pp. 181–3, for useful information as to the various forms of Indian names found in the contemporary sources. Xavier used the form ‘Beterbemal’ for Beteperumal.
- 53 These *badagas* clearly have nothing but the name in common with the people called Badagas who live in the Nilgiri hills, the story of the evangelisation of whom will come before us much later in our narrative.
- 54 Letter to Francis Mansilhas of 30 June 1544, *EX*, vol. 1, p. 209.
- 55 *EX*, vol. 1, pp. 236–8.
- 56 Paul Vaz, a young Portuguese who had spent some months with Xavier, gives a fuller account: ‘He found such favour with the king that this man had it proclaimed in all his realm that all should obey his brother the great Padre as they would obey the king himself, and that all in the kingdom who wished to become Christians had his permission to do so.’ From a letter of Fr Martin da

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- Santa Cruz of 22 October 1545, in *Epistolae Mixtae*, vol. 1, p. 231. See Schurhammer, vol. II (Eng. trans.), pp. 462–3 n. 249. For Paul Vaz, see vol. II, p. 451 n. 166. This is not one of our most reliable sources, the writer only repeating at secondhand what he has heard.
- 57 *EX*, vol. 1, pp. 273–4. Valuable information as to the social organisation of the Paravas, and the use made of it by the missionaries for their own purposes in S. Kaufmann, 'Popular Christianity, Caste and Hindu Society in South India' (Cambridge, unpublished dissertation, 1980).
- 58 *The Portuguese Sea-borne Empire, 1415–1525* (1969), pp. 76–7.
- 59 Schurhammer, vol. II (Eng. trans.), p. 641.
- 60 *EX*, vol. 1, pp. 285–6. Artiaga confirms this from experience: 'he [Xavier] went constantly from place to place, visiting the flock, always on foot, and often barefoot', *Mon. Xav.*, vol. II, p. 378.
- 61 *EX*, vol. 1, p. 287. Who are these priests from Malabar? Schurhammer identifies them with Fr Coelho, Emmanuel and Garcia, and a fourth who may be named Ferdinand (*EX*, vol. II, p. 443). But it seems unlikely that Mansilhas, himself so recently ordained priest, would be given authority over these others; I think the reference is probably to young priests from the seminary at Cranganore, sent out to work with limited training and a great need of supervision.
- 62 According to Schurhammer, vol. II (Eng. trans.), p. 602, he reported that he had never been in a place where he found such good people, and where he had been able to work so fruitfully. For this God would certainly bless the city.
- 63 Letter of 27 January 1545, *EX*, vol. 1, p. 277. This is an early reference to the unhealthiness of the place in which the college was situated.
- 64 DI, 1, pp. 32–4. Xavier, to whom obedience was as the breath of life, was deeply troubled by this insubordinate spirit. On 10 May 1546 he wrote affectionately to Paul, urging him to submit to those who had authority over him, 'for it is a very dangerous thing for a man to follow his own will contrary to that which he has been commanded, and believe me, my brother Master Paul, that in not acting according to what they told you to do, the miss is greater than the hit', *EX*, vol. 1, pp. 342–3.
- 65 Briefly in Brodrick, pp. 286–7, based on Sousa, *Oriente Conquistado* (1710), pp. 425–35.
- 66 DI, 1, pp. 135–6. Letter of 5 November 1546, with Fr Wicki's notes on editions of these works available in 1546. A separate study of Lancilotto is: A. Aurati, *Nicolao Lancilotto; un gesuita urbinato del secolo XVI in India, benemerito della cultura* (Urbino, 1974). This tribute from one son of Urbino to another deals mainly with the information about Japan gathered by Lancilotto during his residence in India, and adds little to what we already knew of his life and work in India.
- 67 DI, 1, pp. 30\*–31\*; 44\*–51\*.
- 68 He was born in, or about the year 1532.
- 69 DI, 1, pp. 792–3. The name is here spelt Luqu; in DI, 1, p. 326 Loquu. His Hindu name appears to have been Lakshman.

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- 70 In point of fact the governor did order his release.
- 71 Wicki gives the date as 11 or 18 November; but the above date, given by Schurhammer, seems on the whole the more probable. See DI, 2, pp. 399–401. See also DI, 1, pp. 325–7; and Priolkar, *Inquisition* (Bombay, 1961), pp. 72–3.
- 72 In 1548, 912 Hindus had been baptised in Goa itself, with 200 children of Portuguese and 500 children of converts. From the time of the baptism of Loku the number steadily increased.
- 73 SR, *Doc.*, vol. III, pp. 284–314. These documents afford an excellent example of the prolixity of Portuguese documents of this period, and of a cumbrousness of procedure which did more to hinder than to expedite the progress of business.
- 74 The two important points were the tuft of hair and the sacred thread, which the rājā wore as the mark of his membership of a twice-born caste. Presumably he claimed to be a Kṣatriya.
- 75 For a letter from him (20 January 1549) see SR, *Doc.*, vol. IV, pp. 240–7. Soares has special words of commendation for the Franciscans.
- 76 Some objected, among them according to one report Antony Gomes; but, as Fr Schurhammer points out, Gomes was not at that time in Goa; vol. II.iii, p. 429 n. 25.
- 77 DI, 1, pp. 536–48. Letter of the bishop of Goa.
- 78 This letter is summarised in Schurhammer, vol. II.iii, pp. 484–7 (Eng. trans. not yet available). It is confirmed by a letter of 31 December 1551 from Diogo Bermudez, vicar general of the Dominicans, to the bishop of the island of San Thomé; he had warned the Portuguese that no credence was to be given to the professions of the rājā. Schurhammer, vol. II.iii, pp. 488–90.
- 79 Among the thirty-three Jesuits who were in India in the time of Xavier, I have identified seven who were dismissed or left the society of their own free will. Mortality was also rather high. At least three died by violence, generally at the hands of pirates; and three others of disease, after only a short ministry.
- 80 EX, vol. II, pp. 29–30; and DI, 1, pp. 44\*–45\*.
- 81 On one side at least he was of Jewish origin. The statement, found in some works, that he was a *mestiço*, rests on no evidence whatever. On attitudes to New Christians, see J. Wicki SJ, ‘Die “Cristãos Novos” in der indischen Provinz der Gesellschaft Jesu von Ignatius bis Acquaviva’, *AHSI*, 46 (1977), 342–61. Such Christians were generally ill-thought of, and Valignano was specially hostile to them. But no New Christian, once admitted to the society, was ever expelled from it on grounds of race or origin.
- 82 All this is reported in a letter dated 2 November 1549 from Punnaikāyal. DI, 1, pp. 584–5.
- 83 Letter of Fr H. Henriques, Cochin, 12 January 1551; DI, 2, pp. 159–60. Henriques adds that the Hindus were much amazed and confused to see a man of so much knowledge and of such good life become a Christian; and the new Christians were much encouraged by the event.
- 84 Rāmesvaram is in the extreme north of the area in which the Jesuits were working. The fisher folk of the area are known as Karaiyār, coast dwellers, and

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- not as Paravas. The date of the death of Criminali cannot be exactly determined. Schurhammer, vol. II.iii, pp. 384–90, has discussed all these events in great detail. He also discusses the propriety of using the term ‘martyr’ of one who died in such circumstances, p. 389 n. 33.
- 85 DI, I, pp. 439–40. There is an interesting parallel in the attempts of William (later Cardinal) Allen, twenty years later, to get some kind of order into the life of ‘the pack of unruly convert students foisted on him’ in the seminary at Douai. The result was a ‘curious mixture of acute boredom . . . tight discipline, ebullient revolt, intense religiosity and illness’. For Douai read Goa and it is all there. See J.C.H. Aveling, *The Handle and the Axe* (London, 1976), pp. 53–9.
- 86 See the long letter of Gomes in DI, I, pp. 409–26.
- 87 DI, 2, pp. 170–1.
- 88 After some delay he was compelled to re-admit Indians; but greater care was taken in the selection, and the Indian pupils were housed in a separate building.
- 89 The details are given in Schurhammer, vol. II.iii, p. 559 and n. 24, drawn from Bernardo Gomes de Brito, *Historia Tragico-Maritima* (1904–9), vol. I, pp. 47–9, 61–5.
- 90 Gago died in Goa on 9 January 1583, ‘old and very tired’.
- 91 In one of his last letters, written on 12 November 1552, Xavier writes ‘I have dismissed Fferreira (*sic*) from the society, because he is not [suited] for it’; but adds that he may be helped to join either the Franciscans or the Dominicans, *EX*, vol. II, pp. 510–11.
- 92 On this, see a fascinating account by Schurhammer, vol. II (Eng. trans.), p. 225 n. 193. Xavier’s copy was in the Professed House in Madrid, and was apparently seen by Fr Schurhammer himself, but was destroyed during the civil war in 1931.
- 93 *EX*, vol. II, p. 504.
- 94 *EX*, vol. II, pp. 7–8. Letter to Ignatius of 12 January 1549.
- 95 *EX*, vol. I, pp. 406–7.
- 96 Letter of 16 May 1546, *EX*, vol. I, pp. 346–7.
- 97 This is a summary of a number of utterances on the subject.
- 98 In the superb edition of the letters by Fr G. Schurhammer SJ and Fr J. Wicki SJ, there is a touching section *De Summa Epistolarum Efficacia* (*EX*, vol. I, pp. 15\*–18\*), which opens with the story that, when King John III of Portugal received them, he kissed them, and before reading them placed them reverently on his head.
- 99 On the earlier history, see B. Biermann OP, ‘Die ersten Dominikaner in Ost-Indien (1503–1548)’, *NZM*, 26 (1936), 171–92. There is considerable divergence among the authorities as to the number sent to India in 1548. It seems likely that six Dominicans were sent, and that the addition of three lay brothers brought the number up to nine.
- 100 Quoted by Schurhammer, vol. II.ii, pp. 349–50.
- 101 There were in fact in Goa four priests and five lay brothers, not counting some



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- who were destined for Socotra and for the Moluccas, and some the admission of whom by Antony Gomes had not as yet been approved by Xavier. *EX*, vol. II, p. 23 and n. 2.
- 102 DI, 2, pp. 6\*-9\*. Teixeira's *Life of Xavier* (Spanish version) is printed in *Mon. Xav.*, vol. II, pp. 815-919.
- 103 The experiment does not seem to have been on the whole a success and was not repeated. Interesting details in J. Wicki, *Die Mitbrüder Franz Xavers in Indien . . . 1545-1552* (Beckenried, 1947), pp. 15-16.
- 104 DI, 1, pp. 29-30, 55-6, 151, 221-2.
- 105 Permission had been given for this; but the scrupulous soul of Fr Henriques was troubled by it, as is seen in a letter to Ignatius of 31 December 1556. DI, 3, p. 600.
- 106 He did hold visitations in Cochin and Mylapore – communication between Goa and Cochin by boat was frequent and fairly easy, though no travel in those days was comfortable. Meersman, *Provinces* (Bangalore, 1971), p. 423.
- 107 This permission was given, to vicars only, by the Brief *Cum sicut carissimi* of 25 October 1546.
- 108 DI, 2, p. 127. Lancilotto suggests the same prohibition in relation to ordinations. See also n. 15; it seems that on the Fisher Coast in the time of Xavier Christians were not admitted to holy communion, on the ground that it was very difficult to express in Tamil the mystery of the Eucharist.
- 109 The bull of Pope Paul III, *Licet debitum* of 18 October 1549, which refers to *locis remotissimis* and covers cases of irregularity not directly contrary to divine law, was generally held to be adequate to the requirements of the Indian situation. See DI, 3, p. 241 and n. 27. Also DI, 2, p. 311.
- 110 The college of St Paul in Goa was an exception.
- 111 See chap. 6, p. 116.
- 112 Details in J. Wicki SJ, *Die Mitbrüder*, p. 22.
- 113 *Die Mitbrüder*, p. 23.
- 114 The Portuguese text of both catechisms is to be found in *EX*, vol. I, pp. 106-16, 339-67.
- 115 Lancilotto writes in a letter of 6 January 1551 that Henriques has translated the *Doutrina* into Tamil; but this seems to be a mistake – Henriques says no more than that he had translated the prayers; *EX*, vol. II, pp. 584-5.

## 8 AKBAR AND THE JESUITS

- 1 Sri Ram Sharma, *The Religious Policy of the Mughal Emperors* (Bombay, 1972<sup>3</sup>), p. 36 n. 47, quotes *Maktübāt-u-Mullā Ahmad*, vol. I, part 3, 84, to the effect that 'the main object of levying *jizya* on them [the Hindus] is their humiliation. God established [the custom of realising] *jizya* for their dishonour. The object is their humiliation and the [establishment of] prestige and dignity of the Muslims.'
- 2 This privilege was later extended to Christians, and made possible the building of churches at Lahore and Agra.

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- 3 Quoted by R. Krishnamurti, *Akbar, the Religious Aspect* (Baroda, 1961), p. 69 from *Ā'im-i-Akbarī*, vol. III, p. 386. As Akbar was born in 1542, the reference is to the year 1562, six years after his accession to the throne.
- 4 *AA*, vol. III, pp. 346–7.
- 5 *CHI*, vol. III, p. 119, and in a slightly different version in V.A. Smith, *Akbar the Great Mogul* (Oxford, 1917), pp. 158–9. Smith, p. 160 n. 1, notes the suggestion that Akbar may have had an epileptic fit, and quotes du Jarric (Bordeaux, 1608–14), vol. II, p. 498: 'Natura erat melancholicus, et epileptico subjectus morbo', but adds 'I have not found elsewhere the statement that he was epileptic.'
- 6 *CHI*, vol. III, p. 121.
- 7 A full translation in R. Krishnamurti, pp. 31, 32 n. 1. The original in *Badā'ūnī*, vol. II, pp. 297–9.
- 8 But note the judgement of one writer expert in this field:  
The Decree certainly modified the theory of kingship accepted in an Islamic state, according to which the political administration was hedged in by the Sadr, the Qazi and general body of Ulamā who practically dictated to the monarch as to what should and should not be done according to their reading of the Law. A great change was brought about, when Akbar placed himself above the contending theologians and was made the highest court of appeal in a field which had been the preserve of the theologians (R. Krishnamurti, p. 35).
- 9 *Badā'ūnī*, vol. II, p. 211.
- 10 *Badā'ūnī*, vol. II, p. 184, and see Sir Jeevanjee Jamshedjee Modi, *Parsis at the Court of Akbar* (1903), p. 183.
- 11 S.R. Sharma, p. 18 and p. 50 n. 41.
- 12 Sir H.M. Elliott, *The History of India as told by its own Historians*, vol. II (1875), p. 190. The whole passage is worth reading.
- 13 All that is known of Henry de Távora, bishop of Cochin 1567–78, archbishop of Goa 1578–81, has been collected by J. Wicki SJ in *NZM*, 24 (1968), 111–21.
- 14 Probably Antony Vaz and Peter Dias, who had been sent to Bengal in 1576 at the request of the bishop of Cochin.
- 15 Letter of Fr Antony Monserrate SJ to the Jesuit General, dated 26 October 1579. *DI*, II, p. 649.
- 16 *DI*, II, p. 596. Letter of Fr Pereira to Henry of Távora, archbishop of Goa.
- 17 Pires was an Armenian Christian who accompanied both the second and third Jesuit missions to the Mughul court.
- 18 The original of the *firman* has not been found. I have translated (and shortened) from the Portuguese text as given in *DI*, II, pp. 648–9, which seems to correspond fairly closely to the style of the original. See another text in *DI*, II, pp. 428–9.
- 19 Letter of Fr A. Monserrate, 26 October 1579, in *DI*, II, p. 651. There is an amusing account of the visit in a letter, 15 January 1580, of Matthew Ricci SJ, at that time still in India, to his friend Fr Manuel de Góis SJ, *DI*, II, pp. 835–40.

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- 20 Sir Edward Maclagan, *The Jesuits and the Great Mogul* (London, 1932), p. 24, but without giving any reference.
- 21 By this time Henry de Távora was archbishop of Goa; Matthew de Medina had arrived as bishop of Cochin.
- 22 DI, 11, pp. 679–82. SR, *Doc.*, vol. XII, pp. 455–7.
- 23 Letter of 8 January 1578. DI, 11, pp. 143–5.
- 24 After capture by the Muslims and long imprisonment in Sana, he was able to return to Goa in 1596, and died in Salsette in 1600.
- 25 DI, 11, p. 711. The other evidences do not seem quite to bear out Wicki's remark.
- 26 The Polyglot of the Old Testament contains, spread over two pages, the Hebrew, the Latin Vulgate, the Septuagint, a literal Latin translation of the Septuagint; and the Targum of Onkelos in Aramaic, with a Latin translation, at the foot of the pages. See *Cambridge History of the Bible*, vol. III (1963), pp. 54–5. The Bodleian Library has a copy of this Polyglot.
- 27 The New Testament is printed in the fifth volume, in Greek, Latin and Syriac, and repeated with a slightly different text in the seventh. Maclagan notes, p. 191 n. 4, that this work 'was subsequently returned by Akbar to the Fathers, and it had a curious history, being said to have been in the hands of Catholics in Lucknow until the time of the mutiny of 1857'. Persons alive in 1894 had actually seen the book.
- 28 J.S. Hoyland and S.N. Banerjee, *Commentary of Father Monserrate SJ on his journey to the Court of Akbar* (Oxford, 1922), pp. i, ii; but no reference is given for the quotation.
- 29 Maclagan gives, p. 27, a list of the princes who had been baptised – the king of the Maldive islands, more than one king in Ceylon, and a near relative of the king of Bījāpur. See also Chap. 6, pp. 153–4 of this book.
- 30 Hoyland and Banerjee, pp. 3–27, trace the course of the journey with minute fidelity, and valuable notes on the places visited.
- 31 SR, *Doc.*, vol. XII, p. 655, from a document in the national archives in Lisbon.
- 32 Monserrate, pp. 49–50.
- 33 Du Jarric, *Thesaurus* (Cologne, 1615), vol. II, p. 507. I have translated rather literally from the Latin. It seems almost certain that du Jarric misread *Latinum* as *Lusitanum*. The Latin translation of the Koran, made in the thirteenth century at the instance of Peter the Venerable, had been printed by Bibliander, with the support of Martin Luther, at Basel in 1543. An Italian translation from the Latin had appeared at Venice in 1547. Monserrate, p. 28, clearly implies that what the Fathers had was the Latin translation. There is no evidence for the existence of a Portuguese version of the Koran at that date.
- 34 Du Jarric, *Thesaurus*, vol. II, p. 507.
- 35 So du Jarric, vol. II, p. 510. The Jesuits called the boy Pahari. The reference is to Prince Murād, born 8 June 1570.
- 36 Monserrate, p. 53.
- 37 SR, *Doc.*, vol. XII, p. 660.
- 38 SR, *Doc.*, vol. XII, p. 663: 'the present was truly regal both in quantity and in quality'.

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- 39 Monserrate, pp. 61–2.
- 40 Monserrate, p. 45.
- 41 DI, 11, p. 79. Letter of 10 September 1580. (This letter is preserved in an Italian translation.) The Fathers seem to have been less than prudent in their use of Christian terms in public, sometimes even going so far as to attack the character of the Prophet Muhammad himself. Akbar seems to have felt it wise to caution them; the fathers agreed to accept his advice ‘not because we are afraid of them for ourselves, but because we want to obey you’, Monserrate, p. 38.
- 42 Monserrate, pp. 118–19.
- 43 Monserrate, p. 120.
- 44 Bartoli’s work *Missione al gran Mogor del p. Ridolfo Aquaviva della Compagnia de Gesù* was published at Rome in 1663. V.A. Smith is of the opinion that Bartoli’s account of what happened is the best available (Smith, p. 211).
- 45 Quoted in full in V.A. Smith, pp. 211–12. See Count von Noer, *The Emperor Akbar* (reprint of 1973) pp. 296–7, for a valuable bibliography of accounts of Akbar and his religious reforms, including H.H. Wilson’s ‘Account of the Religious Innovations of Akbar’, *Works*, vol. 11 (1862), pp. 379–400. This pioneer essay was first published in Calcutta in 1824.
- 46 *Ā’in-i-Akbarī* 77. Trans. H. Blochmann, vol. 1, p. 166. Blochmann adds a valuable note on the ‘Religious Ideas of Akbar’, pp. 167–83; this is one of the main sources on which other writers on the subject have drawn.
- 47 S.R. Sharma, p. 53; V.A. Smith, p. 219.
- 48 Krishnamurti, p. 111.
- 49 C.H. Payne, *Akbar and the Jesuits* (London, 1926), pp. 37–8.
- 50 The prolix letter which he addressed at this time to the *Riva-i-Farang* (ruler of Europe) or as others have it to the *Dānāyan-i-Farang* (scholars of Europe) will be found in English translation in *Ind. Antiquary* (April, 1887), 135–7. A lengthy extract is given in Hoyland and Banerjee, pp. ix–xi.
- 51 The proposed embassy never sailed, so for the time being Monserrate remained in India.
- 52 DI, 12, pp. 582–5. Letter of 25 April 1582 (in Italian). See also *JASB*, 65 (1896), 55; and Maclagan, p. 38, quoting from Bartoli, *Missione*, p. 218; Maclagan gives the five reasons in detail.
- 53 Monserrate, pp. 192–3.
- 54 *Firmān* of February 1583, quoted in *JASB*, 65 (1896), p. 59. The original is in the British Museum, *Additional MSS* 9854, fol. 4.
- 55 Quoted by Maclagan, p. 40.
- 56 Payne and Maclagan both think that it is almost certain that Grimon was the same as the Padre Farmeliun referred to in *Akbar-Nāma*, vol. 111, p. 873 (Maclagan pp. 46 and 48 n. 1): ‘owing to his majesty’s appreciation he received high honour . . . His majesty made over some quick-witted and intellectual persons to be instructed by him, in order that the translation of Greek books might be carried out, and varieties of knowledge acquired.’
- 57 Both letters are given *in extenso* by du Jarric, and included in C.H. Payne, pp. 46–9. Payne’s account is mainly derived from du Jarric.

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- 58 Much obscurity rests on the termination of the mission and its cause. Payne, referring to the provincial's letter for 1572, thinks that the cause may have been the hostility of the *belli ductores*, the warlike nobles, who made access to the emperor almost impossible (p. 231 n. 11). Maclagan quotes the great history of the Society of Jesus, part v, vol. II (Jouvençy), p. 451, as indicating that the decision may have been taken through fear of a general revolt in the empire at that time.
- 59 Pioneer work on Xavier was carried out by Fr H. Heras and published in a series of articles between 1914 and 1927, listed in Camps pp. xvi, xvii. The *biography* by Fr A.S. Hernandez SJ, *Jeronimo Javier SJ* (Pamplona, 1958), is very full and based on extensive research. For the *work* of Xavier we shall turn rather to A. Camps OFM, *Jerome Xavier SJ and the Muslims of the Mogul Empire* (Schöneck-Beckenried, 1957). Hernandez and Camps admirably supplement one another, and give us as complete an account as we could wish of a great missionary.
- 60 Du Jarric, quoted in Payne, pp. 51–2.
- 61 *The Embassy of Sir Thomas Roe to India 1615–19*, ed. Sir W. Foster (1926), p. 275 n. 2.
- 62 An account of this journey is given in chap. 13.
- 63 Letter of 20 August 1595; Camps, p. 181 n. 2.
- 64 Letter of 1 December 1600 to the general; Camps, p. 182. Also *JASB*, 23 (1927), 70.
- 65 See Camps p. 183; Spanish original in n. 1.
- 66 The Fathers deemed it prudent not to proceed too rapidly with the building of a church, although it is reported in one source (Peruschi) that no mosque and no copy of the Koran still existed in Lahore. The church in Lahore was built and opened in 1597.
- 67 Du Jarric, quoted by Payne, pp. 69–70.
- 68 *JASB*, 23 (1927), 203–16. Trans. by Fr H. Hosten SJ from *Chrono-Historia de la Compañia de Jesus en la provincia de Toledo* (1710).
- 69 Letter of 1 August 1599, printed in *Nova Relatio* (1601); see Maclagan, p. 57.
- 70 This impression is strengthened by the note of the Rev. Edward Terry, who was in India 1616–19: 'For the language of this empire, I mean the vulgar, it is called Industan; a smooth tongue and easy to be pronounced, and they write as we to the right hand.' *Early Travels in India* (1921), p. 309. Urdu is of course written, like Persian, from right to left. A valuable note on the use of the vernacular by the Jesuits in Maclagan pp. 193–4, and 200–2.
- 71 Letter of Xavier, 6 September 1604. The main effort was still directed to Persian. The nickname by which Fr Pinheiro was known, the Mogul, seems to have been due to his excellence in the Persian language. Camps, p. 185.
- 72 Letter of Xavier, 1599, printed in John Hay SJ, *de Rebus Japonicis Indicis* (Antwerp, 1605), pp. 863–78. (Copy in the Bodleian Library, Oxford.) See esp. p. 870. In this valuable work pp. 656 to 912 deal with affairs in India.
- 73 *Fuente de Vida* fol. 189v quoted by Camps, p. 131.
- 74 *F de V.* fols. 181–2. Camps, p. 127.
- 75 An abridged form of the Persian translation also exists; at least four copies are

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- to be found in libraries in Europe. The work was known to Professor Samuel Lee of Cambridge, who in 1824 published some parts of it in his *Controversial Tracts on Christianity and Muhammedanism*, pp. v–xli. For most English readers this has been the first introduction to the work of Xavier. See Appendix 17 p. 404.
- 76 Camps, p. 93.
- 77 His sceptical attitude is probably intended to represent that of Akbar.
- 78 Camps, pp. 167–8.
- 79 This belongs to a considerably later date. The letter is of 4 December 1615, published (in English) by H. Hosten SJ in *JASB*, 23 (1927), 125.
- 80 Payne, p. 135, and see p. 264 n. 5.
- 81 The only circumstance that casts doubt on the narrative is that a Syrian prelate would be more likely to have Syriac rather than Persian Gospels. But this is not conclusive. For the confused details see Payne, pp. 26–30; Maclagan, pp. 213–15; Camps, pp. 26–9.
- 82 Du Jarric, vol. II, p. 513. R. Gulbenkian: ‘The Translation of the Four Gospels into Persian’, *NZM*, 36 (1980/3), 186–218 (1980/4), 267–88; *NZM*, 37 (1981), 35–58 has worked out with immense learning the origin and history of the translations available to Xavier. Regrettably, considerations of space make it impossible to do more than refer to this notable addition to knowledge.
- 83 His actual words are ‘Depois tomamos de proposito de cotejar, [e] emendar o Parsio, conforme a nossa vulgata, q’na verdade tinha muitos erros dos escrivãos’ (Maclagan, p. 221 n. 87). This presumably means that it was the Persian and not the Vulgate which was full of errors.
- 84 Camps, pp. 194–5, remarks: ‘This points to the fact that the copies of the Holy Scriptures were destined to serve as auxiliary books to the missionaries for the preparation of their sermons and instructions.’
- 85 Maclagan, p. 268. The influx of artillerymen, many of whom could cast cannon as well as fire them, a vitally important factor in Indian history, seems to have begun in the seventeenth rather than in the sixteenth century. S. Manucci, *Storia do Mogor*, vol. 1, p. 265 asserts that the prince Dārā Shukoh, in his campaign against his brother Aurungzīb in 1658, had over 200 European artillerymen in his army.
- 86 The Armenians had been since the fifth century Monophysites, together with the Copts, the Ethiopians and the Syrians. During the seventeenth century the Thomas Christians entered into the Monophysite fellowship.
- 87 Payne, p. 135.
- 88 Payne, pp. 173–6; see also pp. 251–8. There is still much controversy about the siege and capture of Asirgarh (Syr.).
- 89 Payne, pp. 175–6.
- 90 One of the most interesting chapters in Maclagan’s classic work is that entitled ‘The Mission and Mogul Painting’, pp. 222–67.
- 91 Payne, pp. 160–72. Payne notes, p. 271 n. 5, that there was no actual church in Agra at that time; the picture was displayed in a room in the Fathers’ house, which had been converted into a chapel. This narrative is derived from Part II, chap. 6 of the *Relaçam* of Fr Guerreiro (Lisbon, 1605).

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- 92 Camps, p. 227, and see also pp. 218–19.
- 93 *JASB*, 65 (1896), 89.
- 94 *JASB*, 65 (1896), 79 and see Maclagan, pp. 281–2.
- 95 *JASB*, 65 (1896), 72; and see Maclagan, pp. 281–2.
- 96 *JASB*, 65 (1896), 79. See also Camps, p. 238.
- 97 Maclagan, pp. 274, 304.
- 98 Payne, p. 266, remarks ‘I cannot explain this word.’ Neither can I. This narrative is taken almost exactly from Guerreiro, *Relaçam*, part I, chaps. 8 and 9. Payne suggests that the name might be Baladeva or Baldeo; this is possible but not certain.
- 99 Payne, pp. 137–51.
- 100 *JASB*, NS. 23 (1927), 67–8 trans. J. Hosten SJ (I have slightly modernised style and spelling). The letter was printed in Rome in 1602.
- 101 Payne, pp. 203–4.
- 102 Payne, pp. 204–5. ‘There is little doubt that he was past speech, and could make no response to the exhortations of those who surrounded his bed.’ Sir Wolseley Haig in *CHI*, vol. IV, p. 153.
- 103 Professor H. Blochmann, a good authority, states, *Ā’in-i-Akbarī*, vol. 1, p. 212, that the story is most untrustworthy.
- 104 Letter of 4 December 1615, in *JASB*, NS 23 (1927), 125.
- 105 Payne, pp. 205–8, drawing on *Relaçam*, part IV, book 3, chap. 4. See also *CHI*, vol. IV, pp. 154–5.
- 106 *MASB*, 3, p. 640. *Deformior fit* means, I think, ‘loses his dignity’, and not as translated in the text.

### 9 ROME AND THE THOMAS CHRISTIANS

- 1 The Serra, the mountain, was the convenient name by which the Portuguese regularly referred to the hilly country scattered over which the greater part of the Thomas Christians lived.
- 2 Fr A.M. Mundadan CMI, *The Thomas Christians under Mar Jacob 1498–1552* (Bangalore, 1967), p. 62 rightly recognises this to be a mistake; the text should read Kodungalur = Cranganore.
- 3 ‘Navigatione verso l’India orientali scritta per Thomé Lopes Portugheze’ (1503) in G.B. Ramusio, *Delle Navigazioni e Viaggi* (Venice, 1550), pp. 143–56.
- 4 For a good summary of these various accounts, see Mundadan, pp. 61–6.
- 5 Gouvea, *Jornada* (Coimbra, 1606), p. 22; (Glen) Book 1, chaps. 15 and 19. The reference seems to be to the Villarvattam family of which at least one member seems to have been converted to Christianity. So G. Woodcock, *Kerala: A Portrait of the Malabar Coast* (London, 1967), p. 115. See also L.W. Brown, p. 13 and n. 5.
- 6 To the contrary T.K. Joseph, *Malabar Christians and their Ancient Documents* (1929), pp. 8–9 with details.
- 7 The authority for this statement is Francis de Sousa, *Oriente Conquistado*, vol. 1, part II, cod. 11, p. 17. K.M. Panikkar, *Malabar and the Portuguese* (1929), pp. 5–8, notes that only the rulers of Cannanore and of Venād (the area from Quilon

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- to Cape Comorin), and the zamorin of Calicut, could be called kings. Under them were the minor chieftains of Tanor, Cranganore, Cochin, Mangat, Idapalli, Vadakkankur (often called Pimenta, the pepper country), Procād, Kayankulam and Quilon. But that is not the end of the story: 'The effective power in the land was in the hands of the Kaimals and Kartavas, independent nobles, who maintained armies of their own, and owed allegiance sometimes to more than one sovereign.'
- 8 According to tradition, Thomas Knāya, or Knāyil, had two wives; the first of them received his northern estates, the second his southern estates; from these two wives are descended respectively the northists and the southists. See a clear statement in G. Milne Rae, *The Syrian Church in India* (Edinburgh, 1892), pp. 163-4.
  - 9 Text in Assemani, *Bibliotheca Orientalis*, 3, p. 590; trans. A. Mingana, *The Early Spread*, in *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library*, 10 (July, 1926), pp. 36-8.
  - 10 The Portuguese called all eastern Christians indiscriminately Armenians, perhaps through confusion of the Syrian 'Arameans'=Syrians, and this has caused endless confusion.
  - 11 *Paesi novamente ritrovati et Novo Mondo da Alberto Vesputio Florentino intitulado*, reprinted in *Vespucci Reprints, Texts and Studies VI* (Princeton, 1916). W. Germann was aware of the existence of this book but had not seen it. See also the article of Fr G. Schurhammer: 'The Malabar Church and Rome before the Coming of the Portuguese' (*Kerala Society Papers*, 2 (1933), pp. 291-306, reprinted in 'Orientalia', pp. 351-63).
  - 12 Though Joseph is unlikely to have known the fact, this custom was followed by the Coptic church in Egypt through the centuries, the making of wine being strictly prohibited in Egypt, a Muslim country. The pleasant clear syrup produced by the process described above is wine within the meaning of the act - if left exposed to the air, it will begin to ferment within twenty-four hours.
  - 13 Mundadan, p. 70.
  - 14 *Commentaries of Afonso Dalboquerque*, vol. I (1875), pp. 14-15.
  - 15 Not, as Mundadan, p. 75, 'as there was not the memory of baptism among them'. C.H. Turner, in his chapter on 'The Organization of the Church', in *Cambridge Medieval History*, vol. I (1911), pp. 143-82, has outlined in masterly fashion the development of the threefold ministry, and the gradual limitation of the powers and duties of the bishop.
  - 16 There is scattered evidence for this. G.M. Anathil SVD, *The Theological Formation of the Clergy in India* (Poona, 1966), p. 5, states: 'In some cases their priestly powers have been severely restricted (e.g. it seems that at times they were not even allowed to baptize children without previous authorization from the Syrian prelates).' He refers to M. Mathias (Mundadan), 'The St Thomas Christians of Malabar under Mar Jacob' (unpublished dissertation, Rome, 1960), pp. 314-17. But there is a misunderstanding here. There was no restriction of privilege, but the denial of an *extension* of privilege such as had taken place in a number of other churches.
  - 17 In his *Information about the Serra (Relação da Serra)* written in 1604 and quoted



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- in G. Schurhammer, 'Orientalia' (Lisbon, 1963), p. 347, Roz adds that many have left Cranganore, because the Fathers were forcing them to eat fish and drink wine in Lent, contrary to their rule.
- 18 'Orientalia', p. 345. Pires is not altogether a satisfactory witness, being almost as arrogant as Penteado and almost as self-satisfied.
  - 19 The letter is published in full in 'Orientalia', pp. 308–12. Schurhammer gives both the Portuguese text and an English translation. I have taken the liberty of modifying the English of the translation. This letter suggests that, as noted above, the custom of the Thomas Christians may have been that the bishops alone baptised.
  - 20 'Orientalia', p. 344.
  - 21 da Silva Rêgo, *Missiões* (Lisbon, 1949), p. 397.
  - 22 An attractive account of the 'Malpanate' (Malpān = 'one learned in the Syriac language') is given by G.M. Anathil SVD, pp. 4–11. He refers to DI, 3, p. 804 (Report on the work of Fr M. Carneiro in the Serra, 1557):

The first place visited was the Kingdom of Angamalle, where these Christians have their University (*sic*); for there is in that area a *cattanār* who takes rank as a Father among them; they hold him in high esteem because of his age and learning. He has now been engaged for fifty years in teaching the Scriptures, and he has many disciples throughout the whole of Malabar. He teaches the Scriptures in the Syriac language, starting with the alphabet.

Fr Wicki, p. 804 n. 6, raises the question whether this venerable man was a Syrian who had come to India from Mesopotamia in 1503 in the train of Mar Jacob.
  - 23 Vincent was not from the same Franciscan province as those in Cochin, and so was not likely to be looked on with favour by them.
  - 24 Xavier (letter of 2 February 1549, *EX*, vol. II, p. 74) says a hundred, *facile centum*, but this seems to be an exaggeration.
  - 25 The curriculum is outlined in Mundadan, pp. 139–40.
  - 26 All the pupils were Thomas Christians. Of the writers of the period, only Polanco, *Cronica*, vol. I, p. 457, suggests that there were also Portuguese boys. This seems to be a mistake; Portuguese boys would naturally be sent to Goa.
  - 27 Letter of 20 January 1545, *EX*, vol. I, p. 254.
  - 28 J. Wicki SJ, *Der Einheimische Klerus* (1950), *NZM* Suppl. II, p. 88. This article of Fr Wicki, with the accompanying documents, is a treasure-house of information on all the colleges and seminaries in India.
  - 29 Francis Roz, who knew the situation very well reported that, up to the time of writing (1604), not a single one of those trained in the college of St James had worked in the Serra (*Relação*, f. 93, quoted by Mundadan p. 142). Antony Gouvea gives the reason:

They would not let any of those who had been educated in the college in the Latin rite celebrate in their churches, much less reside in them; nor did they allow them to do anything as regards change of rite, and they did not treat them otherwise than the other Latin priests, whom they welcomed as guests and allowed to celebrate when they went to their churches (*Jornada* 6v–7: 31).

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- 30 *EX*, vol. II, p. 62.
- 31 At this period clergy of the Latin rite seem to have given communion without hesitation to Thomas Christians. Only one authority states that Mar Jacob said mass according to the Latin rite – Manuel de Varga SJ, in the Jesuit *Annual letter* for 1601. Not too much reliance can be placed on a letter written fifty years after the events referred to. *EX*, vol. II, p. 63 n. 9.
- 32 There has been an immense amount of discussion about the plates of Mar Jacob. It has been thought that they may be somewhere in Portugal, but search has not so far been rewarded. Fr Schurhammer inclines to the view that they do exist, that they are in fact identical with the Tevalakara plates, and these in turn with the Quilon Tarisa plates II, described and in part deciphered in the Travancore Archaeological Series, 2 (Trivandrum, 1920), pp. 70–85, and belonging to the time of King Sthānu Ravi (ninth century). ‘*Orientalia*’, p. 348 n. 60. See Appendix I pp. 388–90.
- 33 Fr Schurhammer argues in favour of this view, quoting J.C. Panjikāran, *The Syrian Church in Malabar* (Trichinopoly, 1914), p. 27.
- 34 A full and clear account of these complicated events is given by G. Beltrami, *La Chiesa caldea nel secolo dell’Unione* (Rome, 1933), pp. 3–59.
- 35 We have an interesting letter of Fr Antony to the king of Portugal dated 20 November 1557; Portuguese text in Beltrami, pp. 40–3; Eng. trans. by Fr H. Heras in *Examiner* of 19 February 1938. See also Ferroli, *The Jesuits in Malabar*, vol. I (Bangalore, 1939), pp. 158–61. King John III had actually died on 11 June 1557.
- 36 He was intending to return to Rome, but was prevented by the fever which carried him off.
- 37 See a letter of Mar Elias to Cardinal Caraffa, dated 1580, in SR, *Doc.*, vol. XII, pp. 716–21, from *Bullarium*, vol. II, pp. 239–41.
- 38 This means confirmation as a rite separate from baptism, with which it is combined in the forms of the Eastern churches.
- 39 Melchior Carneiro was forty years old at the time of his arrival in India, and had already been nominated by the pope for consecration as bishop of Nicaea and coadjutor to the patriarch of Ethiopia. Like the patriarch, he never succeeded in reaching Ethiopia; in 1568, by order of the pope, he moved to Macao, and remained there till his death in 1583.
- 40 This bishop is referred to in a long letter of Br Luis Fróis, dated 30 November 1557, and printed in DI, 3, pp. 700–30 and in SR, *Doc.*, vol. VI, pp. 527–57, but no name is given. Ferroli identifies him with Mar Joseph (vol. I, pp. 154–6), Gonçalves (lib. 7: 36) with Mar Abraham. It seems certain that both are wrong. The rival patriarch in Mesopotamia had not been idle; it is almost certain that he had consecrated a bishop for the Serra, and had managed to smuggle him into forbidden territory.
- 41 Ferroli, I, pp. 154–6, gives an enthusiastic account of the mission of Carneiro.
- 42 John Nunes Barreto, appointed patriarch of Ethiopia in 1556, spent six years in Goa, highly respected by all for his goodness and humility, and died there in 1562, never having reached the country of which he had been appointed Latin patriarch.

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- 43 It was thought that three bishops would be present in Goa, thus making up the canonical number for the consecration; but two of those expected did not arrive until 1559, and the consecration was in consequence delayed until 1560. At a later date Rome agreed to waive the canonical rule, and to recognise that consecrations could in case of necessity be carried out by a single bishop.
- 44 At this point L.W. Brown, *Indian Christians* (Cambridge, 1956), p. 22 n. 2, is surely correct. Ferroli and other Roman Catholic historians think that Abraham was sent to the Serra *originally* by Ebed Jesu. But, if this were so, the rest of the story would be unintelligible. The consecration of Mar Abraham, after his reconciliation with Ebed Jesu, was his *second* consecration, the first by the independent patriarch having been judged by the pro-Roman authorities to have been invalid. See Ferroli, vol. 1, pp. 162–3.
- 45 The Council was held in 1575. First decree of the third session, *Bullarium App.*, vol. 1, p. 43.
- 46 Letter of 2 January 1576, SR, *Doc.*, vol. XII, p. 321.
- 47 SR, *Doc.*, vol. XII, p. 341.
- 48 SR, *Doc.*, vol. XII, pp. 318–20.
- 49 Brief of the pope to George de Christo, dated 4 March 1580, Beltrami, p. 196, from *Arch. Brev. Apost.* 47, f. 203. It seems that the pope was uncertain whether the archdeacon had actually received episcopal consecration before the despatching of his brief. The brief uses the form *Palurensis*, and addresses George as ‘episcopo seu electo Palurensi’.
- 50 The names are given by L.W. Brown, p. 54, as Pakalomaṛṛam and Sānkarapuri.
- 51 The pope seems to have defended the teaching of Syriac on the ground that ‘the variety of rites is one of the ornaments of the church, who is like a Queen, clad in varied garments’ (Ferroli, vol. 1, p. 170, who gives no reference for the quotation).
- 52 Mar Simon was eventually caught by the Portuguese and despatched to Lisbon, where he died in 1599.
- 53 The Goa authorities were wrong. In any case their objection was wholly irrelevant to ordinations carried out in an Eastern church.
- 54 Juvencio, *Hist. Soc. Jesu*, part v, vol. II (Paris, 1710), p. 472 gives these more elaborately under ten heads. Two interesting additions are that at times he makes other priests celebrate the mass, he himself saying only the words of consecration, and that he calls Catholics beasts and heretics. See also Beltrami, pp. 114–15, for a letter of the Jesuit, Abraham of St George (of Maronite origin, b. 1563), to the Jesuit general dated 15 December 1593, where the complaints are given under ten headings. See also A. Rabbath SJ, *Documents inédits . . . du Christianisme en Orient*, vol. I (1973<sup>2</sup>), pp. 321–30.
- 55 Du Jarric states that he was reconciled to the church and died in 1595. Gouvea is probably to be trusted as to the date, and may well be right in stating that Mar Abraham died ‘in schism’.
- 56 Angel Santos Hernández SJ, *Missionalia Hispanica*, vol. v (1948), p. 347.
- 57 The details of his early life are given by M. Müllbauer, *Missionen*, p. 364. Materials for a biography have been provided by Carlo Alonso OSA, ‘Documentação inédita para uma biografia de Fr Aleijo de Menezes OSA

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- Arzobispo de Goa 1595–1612', *Analecta Augustiniana*, 27 (1964), 263–333. See Appendix 18 pp. 405–6.
- 58 M. Geddes, *History of the Church of Malabar* (London, 1694), p. 45.
- 59 Geddes, p. 50. A fuller and very vivid account in Gouvea, *Jornada* f. 14d.
- 60 Angel Santos Hernández SJ, *Missionalia Hispanica*, vol. v, pp. 353–4, gives a complete list of the points on which the archdeacon was required to submit.
- 61 The whole letter is given in Latin by Beltrami, pp. 263–7; as is also a letter of 23 December 1601 from the people of Ankamāli to the pope, written in Latin, but signed in archaic Malayālam script (facsimile in Beltrami, pp. 267–9).
- 62 This name appears in all the Portuguese records as Diamper. As the synod held there has passed into history as the synod of Diamper (not Dampier as in *New CMH*, vol. III, pp. 549, 569), we shall from now on use the form familiar in the West.
- 63 By Latins the archdeacon apparently meant students trained in the seminary at Vaippikkotta.
- 64 Gouvea, *Jornada* f. 38d and 39a.
- 65 Gouvea writes '*de lingua Caldea et Suriaca*', which Glen makes more specific '*la langue Chaldéenne et Syriacque, qui sont les deux langues dont ils usent en leurs divins offices*' (p. 197). Chaldaean and Syriac are not two separate languages; the differences between them are mainly in pronunciation. A. Rabbath, p. 326.
- 66 There is some doubt as to the exact date; I think that Gouvea is here reliable, f. 57b.
- 67 There had been yet another ordination, on Easter Eve at Kaṭutturutti, but the number ordained on that occasion does not seem to be given. Hough, vol. 1, p. 410, states that the candidates were very numerous but gives no particulars.
- 68 Gouvea, *Jornada* f. 58b and c. What makes the conduct of Menezes all the more reprehensible is that there were too many rather than too few priests in the Serra; there was no work for many of the young men whom he ordained.
- 69 Glen, p. 239. (French trans. of *Jornada* (Antwerp, 1609).)
- 70 Glen, pp. 251, 254.
- 71 The document convening the synod is given in full in Geddes, pp. 89–96.
- 72 It is clear that a majority of the *cattandrs* present was made up of those recently ordained by Menezes, who were most unlikely at any point to oppose him.
- 73 There is some doubt as to the exact number of lay people present. Ferrolì, vol. 1, p. 185, gives the number as 671. Probably the exact number varied from session to session.
- 74 The profession and oath are given in full by Geddes, pp. 107–16.
- 75 Reading through the decrees is a tedious labour. They are given in full in Portuguese in Gouvea, *Jornada* and in English in Geddes, pp. 89–443. A Latin translation is to be found in the work of J.F. Raulinus, *Historia Ecclesiae Malabaricae* (Rome, 1745). See Appendix 19 p. 406.
- 76 Cardinal E. Tisserant has provided a good and clear day to day account of the proceedings in *Eastern Christianity in India*, pp. 56–68. There is also a good account, with comments, in Ferrolì, vol. 1, pp. 181–204.

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- 77 W. Germann, *Die Kirche Der Thomas Christen* (Gütersloh, 1877), pp. 414–15.
- 78 This is the view maintained by E.C. Ratcliff, but questioned by some other authorities; see references in *ODCC* s.v. 'Liturgy of Addai and Mari'.
- 79 The magisterial articles of Dom Connolly appeared in the *Journal of Theological Studies*, 15 (1914), pp. 396–425, 569–89, with a note by E. Bishop, pp. 589–93. A Latin translation of the rite as revised by Menezes, is to be found in an Appendix to the French translation of Gouvea: Glen, *La Messe des anciens chrétiens dictés de S. Thomas* (Brussels, 1609), pp. 77–123.
- 80 Printed in *Eastern Christianity* (in Latin) p. 72; to this is added a remarkably full and accurate statement about the diocese of Ankamāli, including the remark that 'the archiepiscopal authority is generally exercised through the archdeacon'.
- 81 The fullest account of Roz so far is that by Angel Santos Hernández SJ, 'Francisco Ros, SJ, Arzobispo de Cranganor, primer Obispo Jesuita de la India (1557–1624)' in *Missionalia Hispanica*, vol. v (1948), pp. 325–93; vol. vi (1949), pp. 79–142. Authorities vary between the spellings Ros and Roz.
- 82 From two letters of 1593 and 1597, quoted by A.S. Hernández, pp. 371–2, it appears that Roz was of the opinion that a good *Chaldaean* Catholic bishop, perhaps a Maronite, should be appointed, and that the archdeacon might be given him as coadjutor. ARSI GOA 14: f. 175 and f. 357.
- 83 The letter of Clement VIII, dated 15 January 1600, is printed by Beltrami in *Chiesa*, pp. 256–7 from the *Arch. Brev. Apost.*, vol. 291 f. 146. See also f. 152. It seems that the apostolic see was not very well informed about the see of Ankamāli, if it supposed that it had dignitaries or canons. For the royal documents authorising the appointment and the consecration, see C.C. de Nazareth, *Mitras*, vol. II, pp. 36–7.
- 84 Jann, *Die Kath. Missionen*, p. 170 and n. 2. See also Gouvea (Glen) p. 116.
- 85 Menezes reached Goa on 6 November 1599, having been absent from his see for nearly a year.
- 86 It may be noted that Menezes had an auxiliary bishop, Domingos da Trindade Torrado OSA (consecrated 7 February 1605), to whom he handed over the government of the diocese. Torrado held this post until his death on 30 December 1612.
- 87 Spain and Portugal were united at that time under one crown.
- 88 Geddes, p. 74, quotes from the *Asia Portuguesa* of Manuel de Faria, vol. III, the statement that Menezes after his return to Spain 'lost all the glory that he had acquired in the opinion of the world'. Geddes adds that the cause of this 'I have not been able to learn'. Nor have I. I have found no reference in any other source to a tragic conclusion to the career of Menezes. Hough, *A History of Christianity in India*, vol. II (London, 1834–45), p. 210, quotes the story, but gives no other authority.
- 89 *Dict. Théol. Cath.*, vol. XIV, col. 3115, art. *Syro-Malabare Eglise*, a comprehensive article with good bibliography. See also *Eastern Christianity in India*, pp. 56–64 and Appendix, pp. 163–74.
- 90 The champions on the opposing sides are Fr G. Magno de Antão, *De Synodi*

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- Diamperitanae Natura et Decretis* (Goa, 1952), who defends the legitimacy and authority of the synod, and Fr Jonas Thaliath TOCD, *The Synod of Diamper* (Orient. Chr. Analecta, 152 (Rome, 1958)), who gravely impugns it on a variety of grounds.
- 91 Full details are given in Thaliath, pp. 86–7, who also quotes, p. 93, a letter of Francis Roz written about the time of the death of Mar Abraham, warmly commending the archdeacon, who may be considered as a possible coadjutor, since ‘the people seem unwilling to accept a bishop of the Latin rite’.
  - 92 Quoted by Thaliath, p. 130, from ARSI Goa 15, f. 155–6. This is confirmed by other letters quoted by Thaliath, pp. 133 and 136.
  - 93 This may well have been the case. To translate such a mass of material into Malayalam, a language which at that time had no long tradition of Christian expression, would have been a task scarcely possible of accomplishment in the few weeks that elapsed between the first planning of the synod and its opening session.
  - 94 Tisserant states explicitly that ‘the Acts of the Synod of Diamper were never officially approved’. *Eastern Christianity*, p. 66, and the important n. 2 on the same page.
  - 95 Thaliath, p. 146.
  - 96 Reference is made also to the papal brief *Divinam Dei* of May 1601, as constituting full approval of what the synod had decreed.
  - 97 For a later stage in the dispute about Diamper, see *ICHR*, 1 (1967), A.M. Mundadan CMI: ‘The Invalidity of the Synod of Diamper’, pp. 9–22. V.C. Samuel, A. da Silva Rêgo, A.M. Mundadan CMI: ‘The Synod of Diamper as an Ecumenical Problem’, pp. 23–8. Da Silva Rêgo seems to be almost the only scholar of repute who maintains the full validity of the synod of Diamper.

## 10 LIGHTS AND SHADOWS

- 1 DI, 4, p. 665, letter of 13 November 1560.
- 2 DI, 4, p. 730.
- 3 DI, 4, pp. 746–51. The difficulty of reading these ancient documents is illustrated by the fact that the good doctor writes the word *cirurgião*, surgeon, as *sorsigiam*, on which Fr Wicki comments sagely, ‘Haec vox saepe in documentis mire scribitur’.
- 4 DI, 6, p. 120.
- 5 DI, 5, p. 604.
- 6 DI, 4, pp. 336–7, and also 650–1. We owe this vivid picture to the vigorous pen of Br Luis Fróis.
- 7 DI, 2, pp. 380–1.
- 8 We can now read, in DI, 3, pp. 733–46 the original account by Luis Fróis of these events; but they are recorded also by many of the earlier historians; du Jarric for example, gives a good deal of space to the story in his *Thesaurus* (Cologne, 1615), vol. II.
- 9 We are told by Sebastian Gonçalves, book 8, chap. 2, that she married George

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- Toscano, the brother of Maria Toscana, who became captain of Cranganore, and that some years later she died in childbirth. See also F.C. Danvers, *The Portuguese in India* (London, 1894), vol. II, p. 26.
- 10 DI, 3, p. 720.
  - 11 DI, 3, pp. 721-2.
  - 12 All these passages are quoted, mainly from Diogo de Couto, *Da Asia*, by A. d'Costa SJ, *The Christianization of the Goa Islands 1510-1567* (1965), pp. 53-4. See also DI, 4, p. 718.
  - 13 It was he who was reported as having said 'Go on borrowing in my name until I am thrown into prison for these debts. For I am resolved to spend even 100,000 cruzados on the Christians, as long as there is any money in the royal treasury.' DI, 4, p. 606.
  - 14 SR, *Doc.*, vol. IV, pp. 450-61.
  - 15 The name seems to have been invented at the end of the century by Francis Paes, an official of the treasury in Goa, who in 1595 wrote an account of the sources of revenue. But Fr A. d'Costa is justified in using this as the title of chapters 3 and 4 of his book cited above.
  - 16 DI, 6, pp. 681-3. See also d'Costa, p. 13.
  - 17 It is most unlikely that any Hindu would have expressed himself exactly in this fashion. This is a warning of the element of distortion which is to be found in all the Jesuit records.
  - 18 DI, 6, p. 658. Luis Fróis was dependent for his information on Andrew Vaz, the first of the pupils of the college of St Paul to be ordained to the priesthood.
  - 19 These have been collected by the great scholar J.H. Cunha Rivara in his *Archiva Portuguez Oriental* Fasc. IV to VI (Goa, 1865-75), and have been conveniently summarised in A.K. Priolkar, *The Goa Inquisition* (Bombay, 1961), pp. 114-49.
  - 20 Priolkar remarks that it was unlikely that any Hindu wife would take advantage of this provision.
  - 21 Full text in Priolkar, p. 127.
  - 22 *Bull. App.*, vol. I, p. 47. See also d'Costa, pp. 120-5.
  - 23 For a description of the *Hoh* festival, see B. Walker, *Hindu World* (London, 1968), vol. I, p. 354.
  - 24 It is to be noted that these measures could be carried out only in actual Portuguese possessions, and not in such places as Cochin, where the Portuguese existed by permission of the local ruler.
  - 25 Priolkar, p. 116. DI, 4, pp. 201-5.
  - 26 DI, 4, p. 650.
  - 27 DI, 4, p. 734. The number thirty is given on p. 825, but on p. 650 the number is given as forty. The really sinister fact is that the list of those to be expelled was to be drawn up by the archbishop, the provincial of the Society of Jesus, the vicar general, and the guardian of the convent of St Francis, a most dangerous involvement of the church in the affairs of the state.
  - 28 Priolkar, pp. 116-17.
  - 29 DI, 5, pp. 193-4.

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- 30 DI, 5, pp. 194-6 (abridged).
- 31 *BSOAS*, 29 (1966), 400 (critical review of A. d'Costa SJ, *Christianization*).
- 32 *Lendas de India*, vol. IV (Lisbon, 1864), pp. 292-4. See also A. Baião, *A Inquisição da Goa* (Lisbon, 1949), vol. 1, pp. 262-3.
- 33 DI, 4, pp. 285-6.
- 34 See chapter 7, p. 160.
- 35 DI, 4, pp. 229-30.
- 36 *Historia . . . de la Companhia de Jesus*, ed. J. Wicki SJ (Rome, 1944), pp. 343-4.
- 37 This is the form of the name given by A. Baião, vol. 1, p. 35. Elsewhere Pereira.
- 38 Priolkar, pp. 31-4; he states that 'there is reason to think that the records were deliberately burnt'. Information has had to be laboriously collected from such correspondence as has survived, from references in the archives of Goa, and from stray references in the Jesuit letters and similar sources. This has been scientifically carried out by A. Baião, *A Inquisição de Goa* (2 vols.; vol. II, Coimbra, 1930; vol. I, Lisbon, 1945); more popularly by A. Priolkar, *The Goa Inquisition* (1961).
- 39 A. Baião, vol. 1, p. 293.
- 40 A. d'Costa, pp. 196-7. There was, however, a particularly bad period of terror under Bartolomew da Fonseca. In 1575 eighteen persons suffered the death penalty, two as Lutherans, the remainder as Judaizers; in 1578, sixteen, all for 'the Jewish heresy'. But from 1590 to 1597 no sentence of death was passed. J.L. de Azevedo, *Historia dos Cristãos Novos Portugueses* (Lisbon, 1975), pp. 231-2.
- 41 C.R. Boxer, *The Portuguese Sea-borne Empire* (London, 1969), p. 270. S. de Madariaga, *The Rise of the Spanish-American Empire* (London, 1947) gives a similar defence of the Inquisition, with statistics.
- 42 K.M. Panikkar, *Asia and Western Dominance* (1954), p. 385.
- 43 A number of these are listed in H. Heras SJ, *The Conversion Policy of the Jesuits in India* (1933), pp. 71ff.
- 44 'Bohlen in his *Alte Indien* and Noen in his *Kaiser Akbar* supposed that Akbar was influenced by reports which had reached him of the cruelties of the Inquisition at Goa, but Sir Edward points out that there is nothing in the records to show that Akbar had heard of the Inquisition.' C.C. Davies in *BSOS*, 7 (1933-5), 230. (Review of E. Maclagan, *The Jesuits and the Great Mogul*.)
- 45 C.R. Boxer, p. 270.
- 46 A.K. Priolkar, p. 189.
- 47 A. Baião, vol. 1, p. 415. By far the fullest account of the proceedings of the Inquisition in Goa is that to be found in the narrative of the Frenchman Dr Dellon, who was in the hands of the Inquisition for nearly four years, from 24 August 1673 to 30 June 1677. Attempts to show that this detailed account is a forgery have met with no success. Dellon's work was published in French at Paris in 1684. An English translation, somewhat abridged, appeared in 1812. This is easily accessible to readers today, as it is included in A.K. Priolkar's *Goa Inquisition*. An extensive summary is available in J. Hough, *History of Christianity in India* (London, 1834-45), vol. 1, pp. 712-37.



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- 48 Reference may be made to J. Wicki SJ, 'Die unmittelbarer Auswirkungen des Konzils von Trient auf Indien' in *Arch. Hist. Pontificiae*, 1 (Rome, 1963), pp. 241-60. The decrees of Trent introduced a number of difficulties in missionary areas; some of these were straightened out by actions of Popes Pius V (1566-72) and Gregory XIII (1572-85).
- 49 On George Themudo, see two articles by J. Wicki SJ, in *NZM*, 21 (1968), 172-83, and 243-51.
- 50 Letter of George Themudo of June 1568. He was by that date archbishop of Goa, since Dom Gaspar had resigned and withdrawn to a monastery; from which later he was to emerge to undertake once again the direction of the province from which he had withdrawn. The decrees of the council are printed in full in da Silva Rêgo, *Documentação* (Lisbon, 1948-58), vol. x (1953), pp. 334-413. The decrees were originally drawn up in Latin, but it is not clear whether any copy of the originals exists.
- 51 Those who presented themselves as catechumens were generally expected to receive food from the Portuguese as a sign that they had crossed the Rubicon and were sincere in their desire to follow the Christian law.
- 52 DI, 7, pp. 608-9. Letter of Fr Organtinus Gnecci-Soldo to brethren in Rome, 25 December 1568.
- 53 DI, 7, pp. 637-9.
- 54 This document actually exists in three forms. The first was written hurriedly in Malacca in 1577; the third carefully revised in Goa in 1583. One version was printed by da Silva Rêgo in *Doc.*, vol. xi, pp. 470-638. The other two texts are to be found in DI, 13, pp. 1-134, and 135-319. As far as I know, no historian writing in English has previously made use of these documents; it seems right to accord a certain amount of space to them. Fr Wicki gives us also a useful account of Valignano's work as provincial of India (DI, 13, pp. 2\*-5\*).
- 55 DI, 9, p. 481.
- 56 The first life, by Fr Francis Peres SJ was written in 1579. See J. Wicki SJ, 'Das neuentdeckte Xaveriusleben', *AHSI*, 34 (1965), 36-78. (The complete Portuguese text is given.) The other early life, by Fr John Lucena, has recently been reprinted (2 vols., Lisbon, 1960).
- 57 Valignano was not the first Visitor in the East. That position had been held before him, with less than unqualified success, by Fr Gonçalo Alvares, of whom Fr Wicki has given a lengthy account in *NZM* (1977), 268-88. The relations between Visitors and provincials and other more permanent authorities were bound to be difficult; and much tact and consideration, which were not always forthcoming, were needed on both sides.
- 58 There is an extensive literature on Valignano. See DI, 11, pp. 18\*-20\* for Wicki's summary and for bibliographical information. See especially J.F. Schütte SJ, *Valignano's Missionsgrundsätze für Japan 1573-1582* (Rome, 1951-8), vol. 1.
- 59 For further details, see Appendix 20 pp. 407-8.
- 60 Six places each had been allocated to the following areas or races: Tamilnādu, Kerala, Kanara, Gujarāt, Bengal, Burma, Malaya, Indonesia, Ethiopia, Moçambique, Madagascar. It is not to be supposed that all these places were taken up at all times.

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- 61 DI, 4, p. 193.
- 62 The details relating to Peter Luis have been collected by Fr Wicki SJ in an article in *NZM*, 6 (1950), 115–26: ‘Pedro Luis Brahmane und erster indische Jesuit (ca 1532–1596)’. Full bibliography and references are given.
- 63 DI, 4, p. 857; cf. *EX*, vol. 11, 8, §6, n. 9, for the views of Xavier, and of Ignatius Loyola, on the admission of Indians to the Society.
- 64 Not all judgements on him were equally favourable. Wicki prints one such less favourable judgement by Fr Francis Cabral SJ, from the year 1594. (*NZM*, 6, p. 125.) For another Indian Jesuit, Diogo da Gama, resident in Portugal, see DI, 8, p. 18. The provincial wrote of him in 1570 that ‘there is great discontent about him . . . I have often been inclined to think that he is not intended for our society’.
- 65 DI, 4, pp. 334–6. See also DI, 4, p. 339.
- 66 The reference is to the *Mahābhārata*, which exists in eighteen books.
- 67 There was much discussion then and later as to the morality of this action. The Jesuits did not accept as readily as is often supposed the principle that the end justifies the means.
- 68 Fr Wicki notes that one of these texts has been preserved in Goa and another in Evora. DI, 4, p. 339.
- 69 See DI, 4, pp. 801–9, and esp. p. 802 n. 37, where the misunderstandings relating to the *Gītā* are indicated.
- 70 Fr d’Costa says that ‘he must have been the son of a Portuguese settler’, p. 188. Wicki conjectures that the reference may be to Fr Augustine, an Indian secular priest mentioned by Xavier in connection with Chorao, *EX*, vol. 11, pp. 398–9.
- 71 A. d’Costa SJ, pp. 188–9, with references.
- 72 *Bull.* Appendix 11, p. 71.
- 73 The learning of Fr G. Schurhammer has discovered that there were two Englishmen at the siege of Diu in 1546; these survived when many were killed by the explosion of a mine; ‘Orientalia’ (Lisbon, 1963), pp. 367–8. The arrival of ‘Tomás Estephano’ in Goa is noted in a letter of Fr A. Monserrate of 21 October 1579. DI, 11, p. 644. The article of Fr G. Schurhammer, ‘Thomas Stephens (1549–1619)’ (‘Orientalia’, pp. 367–76) is an invaluable source of information. A further article ‘Der Maratha-dichter Thomas Stephens SI: Neue Dokumente’, originally published in *AHSI*, 26 (1957), 67–82, and reprinted in ‘Orientalia’, pp. 377–91 adds to our stock of knowledge.
- 74 DI, 11, pp. 682–90. The original seems not to have survived. The letter was printed in R. Hakluyt, *Principal Navigations*, vol. 1.2, and by J. Courtney Locke, *The First Englishmen in India* (1930), pp. 19–30. Locke says that the ‘wine of the Palme tree’ is the toddy drawn from the palmyra, *borassus flabelliformis*.
- 75 Everyone, including even Fr Schurhammer, seems to have mistranslated this. The meaning is perfectly clear: in Konkani, as in most other Indian languages, the vowels are combined with the consonants in a single sign. ‘The letters and syllables have their value’ (Schurhammer, p. 371) is just nonsense.
- 76 The letter is published in Schurhammer, ‘Orientalia’, pp. 381–6.
- 77 ‘Orientalia’, p. 372.

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- 78 Full accounts are given by Fr G. Goldie, *The First Christian Mission to the Great Mogul* (Dublin, 1897); his account is based mainly on de Sousa, *Oriente Conquistado*. In the process for canonisation of the martyrs set on foot by Alexis de Menezes in 1600 eye-witnesses supplied very full details of the occurrence.
- 79 After endless delays the beatification of the five martyrs was pronounced by Pope Leo XIII on 16 April 1893. It is to be regretted that the faithful Indian Christians who died at the same time are not similarly mentioned.
- 80 Details in G. Goldie SJ, p. 151. The account by A. Valignano SJ in a letter dated 'Goa, 8 December 1583', is given in full in DI, 12, pp. 917-32. Valignano made use of an account written by Fr Gomes Vaz. (DI, 12, p. 917 n. 4.)
- 81 For the beginnings of Christian literature in Tamil, and printed in Tamil characters, see below pp. 243-5.
- 82 It is possible that a manual in Konkant had been printed before the arrival of Stephens in India. The Jesuits had a printing press from 1556 onwards. But, if such a manual ever existed, no copy of it is known either in type or in manuscript. It is known through a single chance allusion in a letter, referred to by M. Saldanha, *Doutrina Cristão em lingua Concani* (Lisbon, 1945), pp. 8-9. The title page of the *Doutrina* as printed in 1622 reads (in English translation) 'Christian Doctrine in the Bramana-Canarim language, arranged in the manner of a dialogue for the instruction of the young. Composed by Thomas Stephens [Thomas Estevão] of the Society of Jesus, native of London. IHS. Printed in the College at Rachol of the Society of Jesus, in the year 1622.' See Saldanha, p. 26; facsimile on p. 55.
- 83 The term *Bramana-Canarim* has suggested to many that Stephens wrote in Hindustani and Canarese; but this is a misunderstanding. Canarese is a Dravidian language, akin to Tamil and Malayalam; Konkant is an Indo-European language, and bears no resemblance to the southern languages. It is closely related to Marāthī.
- 84 'The *Doutrina* of Stephens is written, not in Canarese, the language of Canara, but in the Konkant of Goa, just as his *Purāna* is composed in Marāthī and not in Hindustani, nor in Konkant, nor in Canarese, as has so often been said.' M. Saldanha, p. 33. Stephens himself makes this perfectly clear in a laudatory stanza prefixed to the poem:

As Jasmine rarest is 'mong flowers  
As musk o'er scents in fragrance towers  
E'en so ornate Marāthī's powers  
Beyond all tongues can reach.

Trans. printed in Ferroli, vol. 1, p. 454.

A more correct and less ornate translation is:

As the peacock among the birds of the air,  
As the *Kalpataru* among the trees of the wood,  
So among all languages excels the Marāthī speech.

- 85 The *Purāna* was printed three times in the seventeenth century - 1616, 1649, 1654. It is now available, in Roman script, in the excellent edition of Joseph L.

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- Saldanha (Mangalore, 1907). At last the wish of Stephens has been fulfilled. The *Purāṇa* has appeared, carefully transcribed into the Devanāgarī script: *Kristu purāna: Marathi text ed. and transcribed in Devanagari character by Santaram Bandelu; with life of Fr Stevens, and commendatory note by the Bishop of Poona* (Poona, 1956).
- 86 The Father was the Italian Michael Ruggieri (Rogerio), who in 1579 writes regretfully that, after making a good start in Tamil, he has been called away by holy obedience to join the mission to China, where he was destined to labour for some years with Fr Matthew Ricci. He hoped that 'the Fathers to whom God has given the capacity to learn the language should stay here for a long time', DI, 11, p. 573.
- 87 The number of Jesuits in India was increasing rapidly throughout the period under review. In 1581 there were 144, in 1582 153, priests. An increasing number of these were Italians and Spaniards; one had been born as far away as Honduras in America. The Portuguese were still in the majority but the Portuguese monopoly had been broken.
- 88 In letters of the period the Paravas are often referred to as docile. This is not the first epithet that leaps to the mind in connection with this rugged and hardy people. But they had, and have, a great regard for those set over them in the Lord. Perhaps the close alliance between the church and the Portuguese power helped to keep them in the way of righteousness.
- 89 The best account of the Fisher Coast in this period is L. Besse SJ, *La Mission du Maduré* (Tiruchirappalli, 1914), pp. 371-479.
- 90 DI, 11, pp. 73-115.
- 91 DI, 11, p. 817. See also DI, 11, p. 803 n. 1. J. Wicki SJ has written on 'The Confraternity of Charity of Fr Henry Henriques', giving details of the rules of the confraternity, in *ICHR*, 1, 3-8.
- 92 In 1548 Henriques wrote that at his first contact with the language he found it so difficult that he gave it up. But later with the help of God he was able to work out a method for learning it, DI, 1, pp. 285-9. He complains of the unsatisfactoriness of interpreters - 'the Father says one thing, but in a great many cases they say something else' (p. 287).
- 93 DI, 7, p. 174.
- 94 Xavier S. Thani Nayagam, in *Tamil Culture*, 3 (1954), 220. We now have a careful and very well documented article, 'Father Henriques' Grammar of Spoken Tamil, 1548', by Jeanne H. Hein, in *ICHR*, 11, 1 (1977), 127-57. Mrs Hein promises a volume in which the full text of the *Arte* will be made available, with much further information on Henriques and his work.
- 95 Fr G. Schurhammer SJ (with G.W. Cottrell) has given a characteristically full and clear account of both these works, together with excellent photographic reproductions in a paper, 'The First Printing in Indic Characters', first published in the *Harvard Library Bulletin*, 6 (1952), pp. 147-60, and reprinted in 'Orientalia' (1963), pp. 317-27. The earlier of the two books was printed at Quilon, the second at Cochin, but apparently from the same fount of type.
- 96 On Xavier's catechisms, see the full account in *EX*, vol. 1, pp. 93-116, and vol. 11, pp. 581-90.

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- 97 For a full-length study of Henriques, see J. Wicki SJ, *P. Henrique Henriques SJ (1520-1600)*; *Ein vorbildlicher Missionar Indiens* (Studia Missionalia, 13 (1963), pp. 113-68); see also 'Father Henrique Henriques SJ (1520-1600)' in *Ind. Ecl. Studies*, 4 (1965), 142-50, and 5 (1966), 36-72, 175-89.
- 98 The discovery is reported in *Tamil Culture*, 3 (1954), 225.
- 99 The Tamil tradition of Henriques was carried forward in the seventeenth century by Anthony de Proença; see X. Th. Nāyagam in *Tamil Culture*, 11 (1964), 117-34: 'Antão de Proença's Tamil-Portuguese Dictionary (1679)'; and E.C. Knowlton Jr: 'Antão de Proença's Vocabulario Tamulico-Lusitano', pp. 135-64.
- 100 H. Heras, *The Aravidu Dynasty of Vijayanagara* (Madras, 1927), p. 464.
- 101 *History and Culture*, 7, pp. 493-5 (N. Venkataramayya).
- 102 An interesting account of the visit is given by Heras, pp. 404-9, based on the Jesuit Annual Letters and on du Jarric, *Thesaurus*, vol. 1, pp. 642-5.
- 103 Heras, pp. 465-7.
- 104 Letter of Fr Francis Ricio to Fr Claudius Aquaviva, dated 20 October 1601; see Heras, pp. 582-3.
- 105 Heras, p. 588.
- 106 See Heras, p. 481, where the circumstances are set out in detail; and also pp. 634-7, where Heras prints in full (in Portuguese) the libellous letter sent by one Antony Viles to the king, accusing the Jesuits of every kind of villainy. One of his charges is that the Jesuits are unwilling to be subject to the bishop (of Cochín), and desire that all their converts should be exempt from his jurisdiction. In view of the difficulties of the Jesuits with the bishop, Andrew of St Mary (1588-1615), there may have been some truth in this allegation.
- 107 An earlier report of these 'Christians' had reached Europe in a letter of Fr Vincent de Lagos to the king of Portugal dated 1 January 1549. Here they are called 'Tomes'. See SR, *Doc.*, vol. iv, pp. 205-11, and A. Mundadan, *St Thomas Christians* (Bangalore, 1967), p. 121 and n. 19.
- 108 The work has been admirably edited by Jarl Charpentier (Uppsala, 1933), who alludes to the many plagiarisms carried out by Philip Baldaeus. Of this more in another context.
- 109 *Brit. Mus. add. MS 9853*. The Portuguese text is printed by J. Charpentier as above, pp. lxxxvi-xcv; a translation marred by some misunderstandings is to be found in W.H.R. Rivers, *The Todas* (London, 1906), pp. 719-30. Where Fenicio wrote *Pallem*, Rivers gives the form *palol*, and describes the official as being 'a far more sacred personage than the *mursol* or dairyman'. On the celibacy of the *palol*, see Rivers, p. 99.
- 110 But Thurston, *Castes and Tribes*, vol. vii, p. 157, notes that the Todas do have a smattering of Malayalam. G.U. Pope states that the Toda language is old Canarese, much debased. For a fuller study, see the fascinating work of M.B. Emeneau, *Toda Songs* (Oxford, 1971). In the census report for 1901 their number is given as 807.
- 111 Rivers, pp. 728-9.
- 112 For details reference may be made to the work of A. Meersman, *The Ancient Franciscan Provinces in India* (1971). See also a study by Fr F. Felix Lopes,

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- 'Franciscans in Portuguese India in 1584' in *Studia*, 9 (Lisbon, 1962), pp. 29-142, based on original documents. The very frank communications of Fr Gaspar OFM, reveal that not all was happy in the life of the Franciscans in India.
- 113 Paulo da San Trindade, *Conquista Espiritual*, vol. 1, p. 285n.
- 114 Brief: *Exponis nobis* of 23 May 1567; see *Bullarium*, vol. 1, pp. 213-14.
- 115 The decision of the pope against the bishop of Cochin and in favour of the Jesuits, in the matter of the parishes on the Fisher Coast, was quoted in the later stages of the controversy.
- 116 Gonzaga, *De Origine* (Rome, 1587), p. 1218.
- 117 This is somewhat obscure. Presumably the concern of the Dominicans was for Ethiopian Christians. Did they regard baptism given in a monophysite church as invalid? Or were there among the Ethiopians as among the Thomas Christians many who had never been baptised?
- 118 The expression 'university' is used by Müllbauer, p. 333, but qualifies it by the addition 'eine Art von Universität'. The authority quoted is Fr Lucas of S. Catherine, in a work published in 1767.
- 119 One main source for the Augustinian activities is the *Memorias da Congregação Augustiniana na Índia Oriental*, printed for the first time in SR, *Doc.*, vol. XII, pp. 2-233.
- 120 The names of all of them are given in SR, *Doc.*, vol. XII, p. 4.
- 121 A royal order was passed to the effect that the number of inmates must not exceed fifty.
- 122 A.L. Farinha, *A Expansão da Fe no Oriente*, vol. II (Agencia Geral, 1943), chap. 1, para. 15: 'Irmãs Religiosas', pp. 96-100. See also an excellent article by L. Kilger OSB, 'Das erste Frauenkloster in Portugies. Indien: St Monika (in Goa) 1616-1834' in *NZM*, 7 (1951), 119-23, taking account of Fr Agostinho da Santa Maria, *Historia da Fundação do Real Convento da S. Monica da Cidade da Goa* (Lisbon, 1699).
- 123 SR, *Doc.*, vol. XII, pp. 182-3. Reference may also be made to a study by C. Alonso OSA: 'Nueva documentación inédita sobre las misiones agustinianas en la India y en Persia 1571-1609' in *Anal. Aug.*, 33 (1970), 359-93; and to T.A. López OSA, 'Expansión de la Orden de San Agustín por la India' in *Missionalia Hispanica*, 28 (1971), 265-322 and 29 (1972), 5-59.
- 124 See *NZM*, 23 (1967), 64.

### CONCLUSION: TO WHAT DID IT ALL AMOUNT?

- 1 Panikkar, p. 198.
- 2 Panikkar, p. 212.
- 3 *Journal of Indian History*, 54 (August, 1976), 442.
- 4 *JIH*, 54, 443.

### II INDIA IN THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

- 1 For an interesting illustration of concern for the maintenance of the rights of Hindus, see S. Manrique, *Travels*, vol. II (ed. of 1926-7), p. 112 (slaughter of two peacocks by a young Muslim).

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- 2 Beni Prasad, *History of Jahāngīr* (Ahahabad, 1922), pp. 149–51. The contrary view, with grim details of the execution, is set out by H.R. Gupta in *History and Culture*, 7 (1974), pp. 307–9.
- 3 The Twelve Ordinances are given in full by Abdur Rashid, in *History and Culture*, 7, pp. 176–8. Typical of the spirit of the twelve is regulation No. 7: ‘I forbade cutting off the nose or ears of any person, and I myself made a vow by the living God that I would not blemish anyone by this punishment.’ This writer quotes, without giving a reference, the just judgement that the regulations are ‘remarkable for the humanity, justice and political sagacity which pervades them’.
- 4 *Memoirs*, vol. II, trans. Rogers and Beveridge (1914), p. 20, quoted by Sir R. Burn in *CHI*, vol. v, pp. 178–9, an excellent summary of Jahāngīr’s tastes and qualifications.
- 5 Sir Thomas Roe complains rather plaintively of the troubles that he had with that all-powerful faction.
- 6 *The Embassy of Sir Thomas Roe to India*, ed. Sir W. Foster (Oxford, 1926), p. 289.
- 7 Sir R. Burn in *CHI*, vol. IV, p. 217.
- 8 *Sir Thomas Roe*, p. 247.
- 9 On the authorities for the Hugli affair, see Appendix 23.
- 10 Estimates of casualties vary greatly. Fr Cabral tells us that, of Portuguese of pure blood, the losses were not much more than a hundred. Losses on the Mughul side were undoubtedly much higher; the figure given by Cabral, that 4,300 Mughuls, Patans, Xuxedos (Rajputs), Persians, Hindustans and Bengalis were found missing may be near the truth (Manrique, vol. II, pp. 418–19). 400 captives is the figure given in a Muslim source, the *Padshāh-nāma*, and this is much more likely than the 4,000 given in some Christian sources.
- 11 S. Manrique, *Travels*, vol. II, pp. 209–12.
- 12 There can hardly be a doubt that this was the original plan. Tavernier, who was usually well informed, tells us that ‘Shāh Jahān began to build his own tomb on the other side of the river, but that the war which he had with his son interrupted his plans, and Aurungzīb, who reigns at present, is not disposed to complete it.’ Tavernier, *Travels*, vol. I (ed. of 1889), pp. 110–11.
- 13 On Dādū see W.G. Orr, *A sixteenth-century Indian Mystic* (London, 1947), a sympathetic account by a Christian, with extensive quotations from the hymns.
- 14 J. Gonda, *Die Religionen Indiens*, vol. II (1963), p. 183.
- 15 Bankey Behari, *Minstrels of God*, vol. II, pp. 266, 330, quoted in J. Gonda, p. 184.
- 16 Quoted, without reference, in Sir J. Sarkar, *History of Aurungzīb*, vol. III (Calcutta, 1916), p. 158.
- 17 The various edicts of Aurungzīb on temple destruction are collected in Sarkar, vol. III, Appendix v, pp. 319–24. The documents suggest, however, that the fanaticism of Aurungzīb grew slowly and reached its fullness only in his later years.
- 18 Strictly speaking, on Jews and Christians and Magians, but not on idolaters or apostates.

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- 19 *Storia do Mogor*, vol. 1 (Eng. trans. London, 1907), p. 234. See also vol. IV, p. 117. On attempts to secure exemption for Christians, see Maclagan, *Jesuits*, pp. 123-4. In *JASB* (1912), 328, it is asserted that in 1693 Aurungzib issued a decree exempting Christians from the payment of the tax, but no details are given; it seems that the privilege was limited to Agra only, and to the dependents of the Jesuits in that one centre. A dignified protest by the Hindu leader Śivāji against the exaction of *jizya* (see Sarkar, vol. III, Appendix VI, pp. 325-9) met with no response from the emperor.
- 20 Sir J. Sarkar, in *CHI*, vol. IV, p. 246.
- 21 There is a full account of all these events in M.A. Macauliffe, *The Sikh Religion* (Oxford, 1909), vols. IV and V.
- 22 Śivāji was from time to time at war with Europeans, as with others; he does not seem to have been actuated by animosity against Christians as such.
- 23 J. Grant Duff, *History of the Mahrattas*, vol. 1 (ed. of 1921), p. 231.
- 24 Sir J. Sarkar, in *CHI*, vol. V, p. 318. For Aurungzib's own pessimistic estimate of his life's achievement, see *History and Culture*, 7, p. 303 (J.N. Chaudhuri).
- 25 Quoted by H. Terpstra, *De Nederlanders* (Amsterdam, 1947), p. 37.
- 26 Details of the affair are given in B. Gardner, *The East India Company* (London, 1971), pp. 38-41. The English did for a time maintain a factory at Bencoolen in Sumatra, but not in the near neighbourhood of Dutch settlements.
- 27 The English records are full of complaints of the unfriendliness of the Dutch. Thus Edward Terry writes:

This I can say of the Dutch, that when I lived in those parts and the English were more from the number than they and consequently could receive no hurt from them, we then used them as neighbours and brethren; but in other places, where they had the like advantage of us, they dealt with us neither like Christians nor men.
- 28 See the interesting information given by T.I. Poonen, *Dutch Power in Malabar* (Travancore, 1948), pp. 278-88.
- 29 The ill-advised attempts of the Portuguese to eject the British by force were not successful. The remarkable victory of Captain Downton over a much larger Portuguese fleet (December 1614-January 1615) was important in two ways – as discouraging the Portuguese, and as making plain to the Mughuls that the Portuguese claim to invincibility at sea was no longer valid, if it ever had been.
- 30 Aurungzib recognised that the English could be useful to him in controlling and safeguarding the pilgrim routes to Mecca, to him a matter of great importance.
- 31 Sir W. Foster in his excellent edition of *The Embassy of Sir Thomas Roe to India, 1615-19* (1926), remarks sadly (p. lxix) that 'we still await a proper biography which will give to Roe's merits their due meed of praise'. We still wait.
- 32 These unfortunates were kept in chains for sixteen months, December 1688 to April 1690.
- 33 These pirates were a grave menace to all at the end of the seventeenth century. They were everywhere in the eastern seas from Moçambique to Sumatra, and every ship and every traveller in those seas was at risk. Colonel J. Biddulph, who has written their history, *The Pirates of Malabar* (1907), remarks that



- the chief cause of their immunity lay in the fact that it was the business of nobody in particular to act against them . . . Their friends on shore gave them timely information . . . officials high in authority winked at their doings, from which they drew a profit . . . The native officials, unable to distinguish the rogues from the honest traders, held the East India Company's servants responsible for the misdeeds of the piccaroons from whom they suffered so grievously (pp. ix, x).
- 34 The estimate is that of Dr John Fryer, *New Account of East India and Persia* (London, 1698), p. 68.
  - 35 P.B.M. Malabari in *Bombay in the Making* (London, 1910), pp. 265–89, gives a number of rather grisly details. But he notes that the penal laws enforced by the English, harsh as they were, were humane in comparison with those observed in other parts of the East Indies of the time (p. 271).
  - 36 Sir William Foster in *CHI*, vol. v, p. 100.
  - 37 H.D. Love, *Vestiges of Old Madras*, vol. 1 (London, 1913), pp. 13–24. The name of the Naik concerned, is given in various forms; but most frequently as Dāmarla Venkatādri, and it is stated that he ruled the coast from Pulicat to the Portuguese settlement of San Thomé.
  - 38 H.D. Love, vol. 1, p. 345.
  - 39 Calculation as well as tolerance played a part in this arrangement – it was thought that these non-European members would be helpful in the collection of taxes. It remains, however, the fact that relations between British and Indians have always been better in the Madras Presidency than in other parts of India, with the possible exception of the Punjab.
  - 40 H.H. Dodwell in *CHI*, vol. v, p. 590.
  - 41 Tavernier was first in India in 1623–33, then again in 1642–8. Equal popularity is ascribed to the book of LaBoullaye le Gouz, *Voyages et observations ou sont décrites les religions, gouvernements, etc. de Perse, Arabie, Grande Mogol etc.* (Paris, 1657).
  - 42 Yet it is a French writer, R. Glachant, who states that ‘the Company, in control of its executives on the spot, took a commercial view of things. It imagined that India could be managed like a shop. It wanted peaceful and regular profits.’ *L’Inde des Français* (Paris, 1965), p. 44.
  - 43 *Mémoires de L.A. Bellanger de l’Espinay, Vendômois, sur son voyage aux Indes orientales, 1670–75* (Vendôme, 1895), p. 203. H. Froidevaux bears testimony to the ‘inlassable et féconde activité de notre Vendômois’, *Histoire des Colonies Françaises*, vol. v (Paris, 1932), p. 39.
  - 44 R. Glachant, p. 48. It should be remembered that France had some other small settlements, notably Chandernagore in Bengal (1690–2).
  - 45 D. Kincaid, *British Social Life in India, 1608–1937* (London, 1973), p. 63.
  - 46 My authority here is M.V. Labernadić, *Le Vieux Pondichéri, 1674–1815* (1936), pp. 101, 103. A different picture is given by other authorities; but I think that this work offers a true picture of life in Pondichéri as far as the influence of the governor extended.
  - 47 For Capuchin and Jesuit beginnings in Pondichéri, see chapter 14, p. 358.

## Notes to Chapter 12

- 48 For the diary of the Icelander Jón Ólafsson, who was at Tranquebar in 1622/23, see Appendix 24. See also J. Macau, *L'Inde Danoise: La Première Compagnie (1616-1670)* (Aix-en-Provence, 1973).
- 49 It is impossible to give an exact figure for the smaller centres, since factories and trading posts were being opened and closed all the time, with shifts in trade and in the exigencies of the political and military situations.
- 50 Note, however, the one remarkable exception – Sir Josiah Child, who in 1687 wrote that ‘the aim of the Company must be “to establish such a politie of civill and military power, and create and secure such a large revenue to maintaine both . . . as may bee the foundation of a large, well-grounded, sure English dominion in India for all time to come”’. Quoted in *CHI*, vol. v, p. 102.

### 12 THE MISSION OF MATHURAI

- 1 See P.R. Bachmann, *Roberto Nobili 1577-1656* (Rome, 1972), pp. 147-9.
- 2 J. Wicki SJ, ‘Die Schrift des P. Gonçalo Fernandes SJ über die Brahmanen und Dharmasastra, Madura, 1616’ in *ZMR*, 41 (1957), 1-14, 109-25; as separate publication, Aschendorf (1957).
- 3 This is stated by V. Cronin, *A Pearl to India* (London, 1960), p. 45, but without quotation of any authority. See also Bachmann, p. 47 n. 75.
- 4 We had long been accustomed to writing Robert *de* Nobili; but Fr Wicki has convincingly shown that this is incorrect, and that, when writing Italian or Portuguese, Robert wrote his name without the *de*. In writing Latin he did sign himself *de Nobilibus*. See *NZM*, 33 (1977), 136.
- 5 Quoted by Bachmann, p. 30 and n. 79, from *AHSJ*, 37, 139.
- 6 The *rhythm* of Italian is nearer to that of Tamil than either English or Portuguese. It is the failure of most Europeans to catch this rhythm that makes their Tamil sound so strange and almost unintelligible to the Indian ear.
- 7 Fr P. Dahmen, *Robert de Nobili: Apologie* (Paris, 1931), p. 12, quotes Fr A. Vico SJ to the effect that  
The Portuguese try to turn all their converts not only into true Christians but also into genuine Portuguese. They compelled them [in Goa] to wear Portuguese clothes, and attempted to introduce the eating of meat, though the Indian stomach, used to a lighter diet, rebelled against this. It was regarded as a great concession, when the Indians were allowed to retain their own garb, provided that this was made of cotton only.
- 8 Nobili was fortunate in that his plans were approved by Francis Roz, the archbishop of Cranganore, to whom he was canonically subject, and by Alexis de Menezes the archbishop of Goa. Nobili mentions their support in his *Apology*, chaps. 55 and 56.
- 9 It is often stated that this was in the Brāhman quarter, but I do not believe that this can be correct. The Brāhmins would never have tolerated the residence of a foreigner in one of their streets. What Laerzio says in a letter (20 November 1609) to the Jesuit general Aquaviva is no more than that ‘the habitation of the Father is in a street where the noble people (*la gente nobile*) live’. This would suit

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- very well a street of Nāyaks or Cheṭṭis. The Jesuits had a tendency to class all high-caste Hindus together as Brāhmins. The letter of Laerzio, one of the most important of our contemporary sources for the work of Nobili, is printed in full (in Italian) in H. Heras SJ, *The Aravidu Dynasty of Vijayanagara* (Madras, 1927), pp. 619–27. On Chinnaxauta, see S. Rajāmanickam SJ, *The First Oriental Scholar* (Tirunelveli, 1972), Appendix VI, p. 251.
- 10 Letter of 1 December 1607. Nobili wrote on the same day to Cardinal Francis Sforza; quoted in Bachmann, p. 70 n. 104, from ARSI, Goa, 51f, 7–12.
  - 11 Our best source for all this is Joseph Jouvençy SJ, *Historia Societatis Jesu* (Rome, 1710), p. 497, quoted by Bachmann, p. 63. Cronin gives, without reference, a long account of these discussions, pp. 62–6, based on Bertrand, *Mission de Maduré*, vol. II, pp. 6–8.
  - 12 At this period Nobili still gave to his converts Western and non-biblical names; only later did he give Indian names or adaptations of Indian names. References in Bachmann, p. 64 nn. 70–4.
  - 13 This was a remarkable achievement, and fully justifies Max Müller's eulogy: 'I can speak of him only as our first Sanskrit scholar' (*Lectures on the Science of Language*, vol. I (ed. of 1882), p. 174). Professor Caland, who had made a special study of Nobili, adds: 'We feel deep admiration for his learning and knowledge of Sanskrit, for not only the *smṛti* (traditional) literature was known to him, but also the Veda, at least one of its *śākhās*; the Yajurveda of the Taittirīyas.' 'Robert de Nobili and the Sanskrit Language and Literature', *Acta Orientalia*, 3 (1926), 51.
  - 14 For a possible exception, see Appendix 27 p. 416–17.
  - 15 All this is recounted in detail in Bertrand, *La Mission de Maduré* (Paris, 1847–54), vol. II, pp. 51–9.
  - 16 See his *Responsio* of 1610, ed. P. Dahmen SJ (1931), and Bachmann, p. 105.
  - 17 Bertrand, vol. II, p. 75.
  - 18 A good account of these events is given by Bertrand, vol. II, pp. 26–33. But a letter of Nobili to Laerzio dated 15 June 1609 seems to have been unknown to Bertrand. Bachmann, p. 96 n. 34.
  - 19 It seems that this title was connected with Nobili's affirmation of the doctrine of creation, and of the contingent reality of earthly things, as against the pure *advaita* doctrine, for which everything visible and tangible belongs to the realm of *māya*, unreality or illusion. Nobili could find support for his views in some of the systems of Hindu philosophy. Bachmann, p. 93 and n. 20.
  - 20 Letter of 8 October 1609; Bachmann, p. 99.
  - 21 This information comes to us in a letter written by the provincial Laerzio to the general in Rome on 8 December 1610.
  - 22 Bachmann gives the impression that Nobili twice used the method of 'manifesto'. On p. 113 he gives a brief summary, and on pp. 153–4 a fuller translation. The confusion seems to have arisen because the first news of the event came through the letter of Laerzio, 8 December 1610, referred to above; but a much fuller account was given by Fr Antony Vico, quoted by M. Müllbauer, p. 186. We have only secondhand information and nothing from the

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- pen of Nobili himself. But Vico had been a companion of Nobili and one of his most enthusiastic admirers; it is unlikely that he was misinformed.
- 23 It appears that at one point the unnamed Parava was mistaken. Knowing the intense disgust felt by the Brahmans for any contact with saliva, Nobili had obtained from his archbishop, Francis Roz, permission to omit this part of the rite. See Bachmann, p. 111, and especially nn. 26 and 27, in which canonical authorities for the omission of this ceremony are cited.
  - 24 But some of the Portuguese Jesuits, like the two Xaviers, were aristocrats of the middle rank. Fernandes emphatically was not.
  - 25 The use of the *tāli* instead of the ring has been adopted by many, I think by all, of the Protestant churches in South India.
  - 26 Laerzio, though friendly to Nobili, had been troubled by the unfavourable reports on his work which kept coming in from the Fisher Coast. The prohibition on baptisms seems to have been issued in January 1608 and withdrawn in August of the same year.
  - 27 The letter is printed in full, in Portuguese with a French translation, by Fr P. Dahmen, in his edition of the *Responsio (Apologie, 1931)*, pp. 194–205.
  - 28 This may have been true. Nobili's methods of discussion tended to be scholastic rather than biblical. But in his *Responsio* Nobili denied that he had made any unworthy use of the principle of the *arcanum fidei*.
  - 29 See an article by Fr P. Dahmen in *RHM*, 12 (1935), pp. 579–607: 'La Correspondance de Robert de Nobili' giving five letters; on Pimenta especially pp. 588–91.
  - 30 L. Besse SJ, *La Mission de Maduré* (Tiruchirāpalli, 1914), p. 201.
  - 31 The complete Latin text with a generally faithful French translation and a good introduction, together with valuable identifications and elucidations of the passages transliterated (often oddly) by Nobili from Sanskrit works, are provided by Fr P. Dahmen, *Robert de Nobili: L'apôtre des Brahmes: Première Apologie, 1610* (Paris, 1931). *Apologie* is perhaps not a very happy translation of *Responsio*.
  - 32 A full translation of the *Publicum Testimonium de modo procedendi P. Rob. Nobili in Missione Madurensi: De modo instruendi Neophytos* is given in Appendix 25.
  - 33 The *Narratio Fundamentorum quibus Missio Madurensis stabilitur*, which Nobili wrote in preparation for this conference has been discovered and published by Fr S. Rājāmānickam SJ under the title *Robert de Nobili on Adaptation* (Palayamkōttai, 1971).
  - 34 On Almeyda, see *AHSI*, 4 (1935), 82.
  - 35 Bertrand, vol. II, p. 184. Roz refused to sign the document placed before him for his signature on the ground that the instructions of the pope had not been carried out. Bachmann, p. 198. On all this see also the full and informative article of Fr S. Rājāmānickam SJ, 'The Goa Conference of 1619' in *ICHR*, 2 (1968), 83–91.
  - 36 Nobili's own words may be quoted: 'et in publicis contionibus et in me unum et Madurensis institutum acerrime invehitur, meumque nomen et aestimationem assidue mordet et vellicat'. Ferroli, vol. II, pp. 394–5. Ferroli gives the date of the letter as 20.2.1610; this must be a slip for 1619.

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- 37 Alexander Ludovisi (1554–1623), archbishop of Bologna, became pope on 9 February 1621, and died on 8 July 1623. He brought into existence the sacred congregation *de Propaganda Fide*.
- 38 Lombard was born in Waterford in 1555, and was appointed archbishop of Armagh in 1601. In 1616 he had headed the commission of theological consultors who condemned the views of Galileo on the solar system.
- 39 The *Votum* of Lombard has been published by Fr P. Dahmen SJ in *AHSI*, 4 (1935), 68–101. The Latin title of it is *Controversia mota in India Orientali: quoad Brachmanes recipiendos ad baptismum Christi et Christianae religionis professionem, nominatim in civitate et regione Madurensi, quae sita est in Malabarico tractu mediterraneo, regibus ethnicis seu gentilibus subjecto, censura et suffragium*.
- 40 The full text is given in P. Dahmen, *Première Apologie*, pp. 86–9, Latin; pp. 190–4 French translation.
- 41 On the Valluvar, see E. Thurston, *Castes and Tribes*, vol. VII, pp. 303–10. Thurston notes that Valluvar do not eat beef, and that some among them are called *paṇḍāram*.
- 42 Antony Vico (1576–1638) came to India in 1607, and joined the Mathurai mission in 1610. He, like Nobili, was credited with a good knowledge of Tamil, Telugu and Sanskrit.
- 43 Da Costa himself wrote the letters for 1643, 1644–6, 1648 and 1653.
- 44 Bertrand, vol. II, p. 339.
- 45 The Pallas are another large group, mainly agricultural workers, and, as they do not eat beef, ranking a little higher in the social scale than the Paraiyas.
- 46 Bertrand, vol. II, p. 361.
- 47 Bertrand, vol. II, p. 353.
- 48 The practice of including in the statistics baptisms of infants *in articulo mortis* tends to inflate the figures.
- 49 On him and his work see Bertrand, vol. III, pp. 41–76.
- 50 For further activities of da Costa, see Bachmann, pp. 251–2.
- 51 Details are given by Bachmann, pp. 233–42.
- 52 The date has been fixed by Fr Bachmann, relying on the nearly contemporary work of Giacinto de Magistris, *Relazioni della Christianità de Maduré* (Rome, 1661), pp. 447–8. Fr Dahmen, *Robert de Nobili*, p. 54, had given the date as 21 January.
- 53 For a full list see Appendix 27.
- 54 We should not forget Fr Henry Henriques and his efforts in the sixteenth century. But Henriques did not attempt either to learn or to write *classical* Tamil.
- 55 But Fr Rajāmānīcam points out that he made only limited use of this peculiar grammatical form; pp. 93–4.
- 56 After I had written these lines, I became acquainted with the following passage of Fr Beschi (in his *Tamil Grammar of the Spoken Dialect*), in which he is undoubtedly referring to Nobili's Tamil style: 'Besides this language is especially fond of Laconisms, and in proportion as you express your meaning in fewer words, so much the more elegantly always will you speak.' After citing a

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- number of the circumlocutions of the kind which Nobili habitually uses, he concludes – ‘Wherefore to use everywhere these and similar phrases, in those works especially which are written for posterity, cannot be consonant with the style of this language.’
- 57 Nobili also left four series of sermons, containing respectively 26, 28, 30 and 32 discourses. These are deliberately couched in a simpler style, and illustrated throughout with comparisons from the daily life with which the hearers would be quite familiar. See A. Rocaries SJ, *Robert de Nobili SJ: ou le Sannyasi chrétien* (Toulouse, 1967), p. 159.
  - 58 *Tūshaṇattikkāram*, pp. 516–17.
  - 59 There is a good exposition of parts of the work in P. Dahmen SJ, *Robert de Nobili* (1924), pp. 64–76.
  - 60 Letter of Fr Andrew Freyre dated Candelour, 1666, in Bertrand, vol. III, p. 245. Fr L. Besse in *La Mission de Maduré*, pp. 677–8, gives a longer and more elaborate account of these events, a good example of the way in which legends grow by accretion and adornment.
  - 61 P. Dahmen SJ, *Robert de Nobili*, p. 78.
  - 62 Letter of 1643, from Tiruchirāpaḷli: Bertrand, vol. II, p. 318.
  - 63 Bertrand, vol. II, pp. 318–22.
  - 64 The question has been discussed at great length by Fr Bertrand in his vol. I, pp. 181–231; and in his separate work *Mémoire Historique sur les Missions des Ordres Religieux* (1862). Not all will find his arguments convincing.
  - 65 It must be remembered that the *sannyāsi* enters upon that life only after having fulfilled the duties of the married householder, the second of the Hindu *āśramas*.
  - 66 Valuable information about the early history of Christianity in Vaḍakkankulam and the neighbourhood is to be found in S. Kaufmann, ‘Popular Christianity, Caste and Hindu Society in South India’ (unpublished dissertation, Cambridge, 1980).
  - 67 *Histoire du bienheureux Jean de Britto* (Paris, 1853), p. 165.
  - 68 Prat, p. 137.
  - 69 Laynez (1656–1715) had arrived in India in 1681, and became bishop-coadjutor of Mylapore in 1708.
  - 70 Ten years after the death of the martyr his brother Don Ferdinand Pereyra de Britto, lord of Monforte, wrote a careful ‘History of the birth, life and martyrdom of Fr John de Britto of the Society of Jesus’. This was published in 1722 by the nephew of the author, and, though it can be supplemented from many other sources, remains the principal source for all later narratives. An enlarged edition was produced at Lisbon in 1852.
  - 71 This admirable missionary served as provincial of the Malabar province of the Jesuits from 1687 to 1692. He was later nominated to the archbishopric of Cranganore; but he died before the bulls confirming the appointment were received from Rome, and was therefore unable to take up the high office which had deservedly come to him.
  - 72 Letter of Fr A. Freyre, 1678, in Bertrand, vol. III, p. 274.

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- 73 Quoted by Prat, p. 97.
- 74 These ten years fill only a hundred pages in the detailed and circumstantial narrative of Fr Prat.
- 75 Prat, pp. 228–9; Bertrand, vol. III, pp. 391–3. Useful details are given in R. Sathyanatha Aiyar, *History of the Nayaks of Madura* (Oxford, 1924), pp. 213–22.
- 76 The cutting off of the hands and feet may have been a precautionary measure, to immobilise the ghost and to prevent it from sallying forth in search of reprisals against the murderers. There is good evidence for the prevalence of such practices in India.
- 77 Not long after Britto's death steps were taken to promote the cause of his beatification. There were endless delays, but at last on 21 August 1853 Pope Pius IX enrolled the martyr in the ranks of the blessed. On 22 June 1946 Pius XII completed the process, and John de Britto was canonised as St John de Britto. For full details up to 1853, see Prat, pp. 400–21.
- 78 Our best authority is still the careful summary given by Fr P. Dahmen SJ on pp. 77–80 of his *Robert de Nobili* (1924). This is based on the elaborate researches of Fr L. Besse SJ, who had resided many years in India, and whose *Mission de Maduré* has often been referred to in these pages. Dahmen carries the survey on to the year 1756, when the mission had been in existence for 150 years.

#### 13 THE THOMAS CHRISTIANS AGAIN

- 1 All this is dealt with in J. Kollaparambil, *The Archdeacon of all India* (Rome, 1966).
- 2 See the letter of the archdeacon and his counsellors to the pope, 21 December 1601, in G. Beltrami, *La chiesa Caldea*, doc. 32, p. 263:

We cannot but be moved by grief that your holiness has taken away from the prelates of our church the ancient title of archbishop and metropolitan, which previous bishops have had from time immemorial. We knew this would be so bitter to the members of our church that we did not in any way dare to communicate this news to them, except to a few of broader mind, before we had warned your holiness of the state of affairs.

A further letter from the people of Ankamali is in Beltrami, doc. 34 of 23 December 1601, pp. 267–9.
- 3 This remedial action was taken by Pope Paul V in the constitution *Romanus Pontifex* of 22 December 1608. *Bull.*, vol. II, 8–9. Jann, *Missionen* (Paderborn, 1915), p. 171, states that 'the primatial rights of Goa over Angamalle remained in existence'. But the constitution expressly affirms that the archbishop of Ankamali is *not* a suffragan of Goa, and that his diocese is exempt from any superiority or dominion of the archbishopric of Goa. What caused the doubt was the obligation laid on the bishop of attending councils in Goa.
- 4 See Müllbauer, *Geschichte* (Freiburg i.B., 1852), p. 168.
- 5 The boundaries were fixed by Pope Paul V in two briefs of 3 December 1609, *Cum sicut* and *Cum nobis notum esset*; Jann, *Missionen*, p. 171 n. 2. See also Jann,

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- p. 173 for the brief *Alias postquam* of 6 February 1616.
- 6 Quoted by Ferroli, *The Jesuits in Malabar*, vol. 1 (Bangalore, 1939), pp. 317–18.
  - 7 The details are given, perhaps at unnecessary length, by Ferroli, vol. 1, pp. 312–36.
  - 8 The full text of the pope's letter is found in Ferroli, vol. 1, p. 336, referring to G. Beltrami, *Chiesa*, pp. 27–32. Fr K. Werth, *Das Schisma der Thomaschristen* (Limburg, 1937), p. 24 says that 'the controversy dragged on until the year 1616, when it was brought to an end by energetic action on the part of the Pope'. But in 1616 there was a new bishop of Cochin.
  - 9 The letter is given in full in Ferroli, vol. 1, pp. 310–11.
  - 10 Germann, *Die Kirche der Thomas Christen* (Gütersloh, 1877), pp. 435–6; Werth, p. 25; Cordara, p. 265.
  - 11 Note that in the letter of 3 December 1615, quoted above, George had written, 'Fr Stephen de Britto is my old friend. We know each other, and we have governed this Church in perfect agreement; often I had recourse to his prudent advice . . . he was known and loved by all this people, on account of his incredible gentleness.' Ferroli, vol. 1, p. 311.
  - 12 Quoted by Ferroli, vol. 1, p. 365, but no reference given.
  - 13 Francis Donati OP was a Florentine aristocrat and a linguist of distinction. Born in 1596, in 1624 he was appointed by Pope Urban VIII as *missionarius apostolicus* in the East Indies, and after many delays reached India in 1626. He learnt Malayalam in Cochin, and with the approval of the rājā of Kaṭutturutti he built a church there and opened a seminary for the training of Indian priests. He won high opinions for his piety and his knowledge of Syriac. Naturally his presence there was as gall and wormwood to Britto and the Jesuits, who in 1633 were successful in securing the withdrawal of all Dominicans from the Serra. Werth, *Schisma*, pp. 34–7, with copious references to the domestic archives of Propaganda, and to Joseph Sebastiani, *Breve racconta della vita, missioni e morte gloriosa del Ven. P.M.F. Francesco Donati* (Rome, 1669), a work which I have not been able to see.
  - 14 Werth, pp. 29–30, has no difficulty in showing that these allegations were unfounded. The weakening of Portuguese power and the aggressions of the Dutch are quite sufficient to account for the financial difficulties of the Portuguese, in the sufferings caused by which the church was likely also to suffer.
  - 15 J. Thekedatu SDB, *The Troubled Days of Francis Garcia S.J., Archbishop of Cranganore (1641–59)* (Rome, 1972), p. 22. See also Ferroli, vol. 11, p. 26.
  - 16 This is the date given by Thekedatu, p. 22 n. 4, quoting Kollaparambil, pp. 160, 163; this seems to be correct. Werth, p. 37, gives 1637 as the date, but this seems to rest on no reliable evidence.
  - 17 Thekedatu, p. 22 n. 4. All this was, of course, common form in the controversies of those days.
  - 18 In Goa on the feast of All Saints, 1637.
  - 19 Letter of 1 January 1633, in Ferroli, vol. 1, p. 371.
  - 20 *Troubled Days*, p. 24.



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- 21 Thekedatu, pp. 31–2.
- 22 Thekedatu, pp. 32–3, from a document in the Jesuit archives in Rome.
- 23 Ferroli, vol. II, p. 31.
- 24 The letter of Thomas has not been found. But there seems to be no doubt that it was sent. See Thekedatu, p. 38 n. 54.
- 25 In some of the sources he is called Theodore or Adeodatus. Fr Thekedatu spells the name Atallah.
- 26 Mylapore, it will be remembered, was not Portuguese territory, except for the fort; and the British were already established in Madras five or six miles away.
- 27 It is the special merit of Fr Thekedatu to have worked out in considerable detail the story of Ahatallah. It is possible that additional materials may be discovered, but it is unlikely that they will substantially alter the picture.
- 28 See Germann, p. 456.
- 29 Müllbauer, p. 301.
- 30 Fr Werth, who is not generally uncritical, has joined the procession, p. 49; he cites Vincenzo di S. Caterina, *Viaggio* (Venice, 1678), p. 171, and Raulinus, *Historia* (Rome, 1745), p. 442.
- 31 See the full discussion in Thekedatu, pp. 79–82.
- 32 Ferroli, vol. II, p. 50. No indication is given as to where this letter is to be found. Ferroli refers to a *Brief Sketch* by Fr Bernard TOCD (1924), p. 60.
- 33 Our written sources do not speak of the Cross. Oral tradition reports that a rope was attached to the Cross, so that those who could not actually touch the Cross itself could take part in the oath by touching the rope. I think that Fr Thekedatu is right in holding that both accounts are true; only a small part of the crowd could have made their way into the church itself; presumably the rope was passed from within the church and carried round the Cross to make possible the symbolic participation of all present in the oath-taking. See p. 60 n. 30.
- 34 The names of the four *cattanārs* are given in L.W. Brown, *Indian Christians* (Cambridge, 1956), p. 101 n. 2, and in Thekedatu, p. 62.
- 35 See W. Smith, *Dictionary of Christian Antiquities*, vol. I (1876), s.v. ‘Alexandria, Councils of’. It is there stated that the newly elected patriarch knelt down by the body of the deceased patriarch and laid the hand of his predecessor on his own head, thus securing in rather macabre fashion a tactual succession in the episcopate.
- 36 So Werth, p. 46. Fr Werth writes that ‘no one knew better than Thomas de Campo that this sacrilegious consecration was invalid’. I am not sure; it seems to me more probable that the doubts expressed by others gradually entered his mind and made him doubtful as to what his status really was.
- 37 These terms had very little to do with geography. The distinction was believed to go back to the time of Thomas Knāyil and his two wives. All recognised themselves as belonging to a single church; but there was little if any intermarriage, and some differences in tradition existed between the two bodies.
- 38 For a list of these documents, see Jann, *Missionen* (Paderborn, 1915), p. 367 and notes.
- 39 The names are Hyacinth of St Vincent, Marcel of St Ivo, Joseph of St Mary (Sebastiani), and Vincent of St Catherine of Siena.

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- 40 Fr Thekedatu states, p. 94, that he had a better claim than Thomas to the succession, but does not give supporting evidence for this statement. Matters were not helped when the Inquisitors in Goa added a further complication to the complex situation by appointing a commissary, Fr John de Lisboa OP, to deal with the affairs of the Serra.
- 41 On the *Hortus*, see Appendix 30.
- 42 Ferroli, vol. 11, p. 58 writes 'wearing a mitre which according to the Carmelite Fr Matthew he had cleverly obtained for himself'. No reference given.
- 43 Jann, *Missionen*, p. 369. The consecration took place in the pope's private chapel.
- 44 Brief *Injuncti nobis divinitus* of 17 December 1659, *Jus. pontif. de Prop. Fide*, vol. 1 (1888), pp. 314-17.
- 45 Brief *Pro commissa nobis* of 24 December 1659. Thekedatu says 'one or two native priests'. But there were at that time no Indian regular clergy. Sebastiani is also authorised to release the archdeacon and those of his party from all ecclesiastical sentences and penalties, on condition only of their giving adequate evidence of true penitence. *Jus. pontif.*, vol. 1, pp. 317-18.
- 46 We are told that in addition to Latin and Greek, Spanish, Portuguese and Hebrew, Syriac and Sinhalese, he could read also Konkani, Marathi, Tamil, Malayalam and Sanskrit. The extent of his mastery of all these languages remains undefined.
- 47 Thekedatu, p. 162.
- 48 Werth, pp. 136-47, published from the archives of the Propaganda an immense list of no less than 47 instructions given to Sebastiani before he left Rome. Instruction 5 bids him avoid during the voyage anything by which his episcopal dignity could become known. In celebrating mass, he must use only the ritual prescribed for ordinary priests. Werth adds, p. 136, that during the voyage even his three companions did not know that he was a bishop.
- 49 The terms of the surrender are given in F.C. Danvers, *The Portuguese in India*, vol. 11, pp. 327-8.
- 50 A much less favourable picture is given by the Jesuit Bras de Azevedo, who tells us that he was a man without learning, all that he knew was enough Syriac to say mass. Thekedatu, p. 159, from ARSI Goa, 49 f. 200v. Another source tells us that Chandy had been very hostile to the Jesuits, so perhaps their report on him was not entirely impartial.
- 51 Paulinus of S. Bartholomew gives the date as 31 January 1663. Ferroli, vol. 11, p. 60.
- 52 Werth, pp. 165-6.
- 53 The pope recognised his merits and services by appointing him in 1667 to the small bishopric of Bisignano, once held by Marignolli; and in 1672 to the more important see of Città di Castello in Umbria, where he died in 1689.
- 54 On van Rhee and the *Hortus Indicus Malabaricus*, see chap. 15, and Appendix 30.
- 55 This place I have not been able to identify. Germann, p. 453, says that it is 3 to 4 miles north-east of Cochin.

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- 56 *Bull.*, vol. II, p. 262. The signatures on this document are interesting: Alexander (Chāndy), metropolita da Koll Hendo=totius Indiae; Guibargisa da Paramba (Geeverghese a Campo); Mathay deskana Marta Mariam=Matthaeus a S. Maria. Chāndy's signature, giving the ancient title of the archbishops, makes clear his own understanding of his position in the church.
- 57 Naturally slander has been busy with the character and reputation of Thomas. In 1657 two representatives of the church went to visit the archdeacon, as at that date he still was. Sebastiani quotes their report as saying that they found him more like an atheist than a Christian, 'denying hell which they threatened, and laughing at the very idea of sin'. *Prima speditione*, pp. 135-9.
- 58 Thekedatu quotes authorities which give the figure as 80,000, or even as low as 70,000, p. 41 n. 2.
- 59 Müllbauer, p. 315 n. 3, gives, from Anquetil-Duperron, *Voyage aux Indes orientales: tome préliminaire* (Paris, 1771), p. 179, the interesting information that eighty-four churches of Thomas Christians were faithful to Chāndy, thirty to Thomas, and that twelve were mixed. To these he adds twelve of the Latin rite. But the sojourn of Anquetil-Duperron in India (1755-61) belongs to a period considerably later than that dealt with in this chapter.
- 60 Ferroli, vol. II, p. 63, lists eight points on which Gregory insisted, as distinguishing his position from that of Rome.
- 61 On this see Germann, p. 526.
- 62 Germann, pp. 526-7.
- 63 Ferroli, vol. II, p. 143, says '12th Medam 1670, two days before Mar Gregory', but quotes no authority for this statement.
- 64 Germann, p. 529.
- 65 The date of his death is uncertain. Some authorities place it as late as 1692, when he must have been about eighty years old. Others give the date as 6 February 1687.
- 66 Ferroli, vol. II, p. 98, and see also Jann, *Missionen*, p. 376. Jann writes of 'his nephew Matthew, who was entirely unqualified for any such appointment', but quotes no authority for this statement.
- 67 Jann, *Missionen*, p. 376. The consecration took place in 1677.
- 68 In spite of his name, Custodius was a pure Indian, a Brāhman from Vema near Goa. In 1669 (or in 1671) he had been consecrated vicar apostolic for Bijāpur (see chap. 14 p. 340). By a curious slip the usually accurate Jann, p. 376, assigns this mission to Malabar to the well-known Mgr Francis Pallu, a Frenchman, who had become vicar apostolic of Tonkin in 1659. But Pallu was titular bishop of Heliopolis and not of Hierapolis.
- 69 E. Hull, *Bombay Mission History* (Bombay, 1927), p. 54.
- 70 This Mar Simeon is a somewhat mysterious person. Ferroli writes enigmatically of him that 'After some time he went to Pondicherry, where he lived with the Capuchins' (vol. II, p. 125 n. 2). But it seems that his migration to Pondichéri was not entirely voluntary, and that he was kept closely under control. There is no evidence of his exercising any episcopal functions in India, with the single exception of the consecration mentioned above.

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- 71 Raulinus, *Historia* (Rome, 1745), p. 447. Clement XI so far gave way to Portuguese insistence as to declare in 1709 that the authority of the vicars apostolic was limited to those areas which remained inaccessible to the diocesan bishop; Müllbauer, p. 313.

### 14 OTHER ROMAN CATHOLIC MISSIONS

- 1 F. Coutinho, *Le régime paroissial des diocèses de rite latin de l'Inde* (Louvain/Paris, 1958), p. 163 n. 14.
- 2 *Acta*, III, folio 1, quoted in SCPF, *Memoria Rerum*, vol. 1 (1971), p. 86.
- 3 Quoted in *Memoria Rerum*, vol. 1, pp. 197–8.
- 4 Fr R. Corrigan, quoted in *Mem. Rer.*, vol. 1, p. 198. The article by the present archivist of Propaganda, Fr Joseph Metzger OMI, 'Francesco Ingoli, der erste Sekretär der Congregation' (*Mem. Rer.*, vol. 1, pp. 197–243) is an excellent, well-documented, and carefully considered presentation of the man.
- 5 *Mem. Rer.*, vol. 1, p. 217.
- 6 Ingoli held that indigenous candidates should be trained in their own countries and not sent to the West, partly because of the great expense of Western training, partly because of the dangers of corruption in Western society.
- 7 In a number of sources the date is given as 1594, but this seems to me impossible. In the complaint against him, written by Mgr John da Rocha, administrator of the archdiocese of Goa (1633), Matthew is described as *adhuc iuventute aetateque viridi valde immaturus*. T. Ghesquière, OSB, *Mathieu de Castro, premier vicaire apostolique aux Indes* (Louvain, 1937), p. 130. It is hardly possible that a man of thirty-nine should be so described, especially in India where men tend to age more quickly than in the West. Dom Ghesquière discusses the whole question, p. 117. I have no doubt that the date which I have given is correct.
- 8 C. Mercês de Melo SJ, *The Recruitment and Formation of the Native Clergy in India (16th–19th Century)* (Lisbon, 1955), p. 206.
- 9 This statement is drawn from a later document produced by Matthew: but his views remained unchanged throughout his whole life.
- 10 Maffeo Barberini, pope 1623–44.
- 11 The first official use of this term is apparently to be found in the bull of Urban VIII, *Ad uberos fructus*, of 18 May 1638 (See *Juris. Pont. Prop. Fid.*, vol. 1, pp. 173–4). The bull gives extensive privileges to facilitate the ordination of candidates put forward by the Propaganda. These were the privileges granted to Matthew de Castro, though the technical term was not used. The exemption from letters dimissory was of practical value in his case, since the archbishop of Goa would certainly not have granted them.
- 12 The document is given in full in Ghesquière, pp. 124–5.
- 13 See Ghesquière, pp. 129–30, where the whole document, dated 20 December 1633, is quoted.
- 14 The views of the council of Trent were clearly and concisely expressed by Pope Benedict XIV (1740–58): 'Today benefice alone is a legitimate title for the

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- conferring of holy orders . . . patrimony is acceptable only when a dispensation has been obtained.' The document is quoted in Melo, p. 242.
- 15 Melo, pp. 150, 156–7.
  - 16 A good description of the development of the idea of vicars apostolic in Ghesquière, pp. 68–76: 'Note sur l'origine des Vicariats Apostoliques'. See also S. Delacroix, *Histoire des Missions Catholiques* (1958), vol. 11, 7, pp. 132–64, 'La création et les débuts des Vicaires Apostoliques'. A useful article in *New Cath. Encycl.*, vol. XIV, pp. 638–9, with bibliography.
  - 17 Idalcan means the kingdom of Bijapur. The curious Portuguese form is a corruption of Adil Khān, the name of the king. This was not in Portuguese territory. Moreover, one of Ingoli's concerns was that missions should cease to hug the coast, and should penetrate more deeply into the heart of India. See chap. 8, p. 178 for the recommendation of Aquaviva to the same effect.
  - 18 See N. Kowalsky OMI: 'Zur Entwicklungsgeschichte der apostolischen Vikare' in *NZM*, 13 (1957), 271–88; and also F. Combaluzière CM, in *NZM*, 20 (1964), 241–3.
  - 19 The authority for this statement is N. Manucci, *Storia do Mogor*, vol. 1, trans. W. Irvine (London, 1908), pp. 211–12.
  - 20 Maclagan, *Jesuits* (London, 1932), pp. 111–13, gives a number of details from Jesuit sources. He says that Matthew was vicar apostolic of the kingdom of the Great Mogul; but the evidence does not seem to bear this out. The Vulgate of Psalm 79: 14 reads: 'Exterminavit eam aper de silva; et singularis ferus depastus est eam.'
  - 21 See Joseph Metzler OMI: 'Der Brahmanenspiegel des Matthäus de Castro' in *NZM*, 23 (1967), 252–65.
  - 22 Metzler, p. 265.
  - 23 See Ghesquière, p. 111. Joseph refers to the visit in his *Prima Speditione* (1666), pp. 77–9, and in terms of unqualified praise for Matthew.
  - 24 Ghesquière, p. 115, writes that 'the secretaries continued to show their confidence in him by taking advice on Indian affairs'; but in point of fact I have not found any evidence for this beyond the single case which Ghesquière quotes from the year 1673 (p. 115 n. 3).
  - 25 Fr Metzler writes of the lack of self-control of Matthew, and the clumsy actions by which he brought down upon himself the anger of his enemies and which landed him in ever-increasing difficulties. So Ingoli 'had not much luck in these proceedings'. *Mem. Rev.*, vol. 1 p. 220.
  - 26 Ghesquière, p. 117 n. 1, says that both of these were nephews of Matthew, who had been brought by him to the college of Propaganda in 1658. Thomas de Castro was certainly a nephew of Matthew. In the case of Custodius de Pinho I have not been able to verify the relationship; I have not found it referred to in any other authority.
  - 27 Ghesquière, p. 116 n. 1, refers to a detailed statement of baptisms, confessions and communions in the vicariate from 1656 to 1672, preserved in the archives of Propaganda, but unfortunately gives no details.
  - 28 For a short time, as recorded elsewhere (chap. 13, p. 330) Custodius was a visitor

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- of the diocese of the Serra, but seems to have accomplished little if anything there. Like Matthew, Custodius seems to have been involved in political activities. Ferroli, *The Jesuits in Malabar*, vol. II (Bangalore, 1951), p. 183n. (on the authority of D'Sá, *History of the Catholic Church in India*, vol. II, p. 9) affirms that he made reports on the affairs of India to the viceroy in Goa, and was rewarded by the Portuguese for these services.
- 29 S. Silva, *History of Christianity in Canara*, vol. I (Karwar, 1957), pp. 56–73, gives a very unfavourable account of de Castro. He writes entirely from the Portuguese (Goan) point of view, but adds a number of valuable details to the account, such as that during his tenure of office he had ordained twenty-two priests (p. 69).
  - 30 There is some doubt about the dates; but the chronology as given in the text seems the most probable.
  - 31 S. Silva, p. 68, gives the date as 16 July 1685, but without quoting authority. On Joseph Vaz, see S.G. Pereira, *Life of the Venerable Father Joseph Vaz* (Galle, 1953<sup>2</sup>).
  - 32 All this has been dealt with at length and on the basis of original research in the book several times referred to, of Carlos Mercês de Melo SJ, *The Recruitment and Formation of the Native Clergy in India (16th–19th Century)* (Lisbon, 1955).
  - 33 The report emanated from a merchant who claimed to have lived for three years in Kambaluc (Peking).
  - 34 The OED s.v. (1914) defines a seraphin as 'a silver coin formerly current in India, worth about 1s.5d'.
  - 35 There is some uncertainty as to the date. See C. Wessels SJ, *Early Jesuit Travellers in Central Asia 1603–1721* (The Hague, 1924), p. 24.
  - 36 C.H. Payne identifies Chalis as Kara-Shahr; Goes was in this city from April till July 1604. See *Jahāngīr and the Jesuits* (London, 1930), p. 152.
  - 37 Marco Polo wrote, apparently with some truth, that Camul has the custom of the husbands giving up not only their house but their wives also for the entertainment of strangers. Yule, *Marco Polo*, vol. I, p. 210. There is a fascinating description of Camul in M. Cable and F. French, *Through Jade Gate and Central Asia* (London, 1927), pp. 209–22. The approach is described as follows: 'For six miles before we sighted the town, we were travelling in highly cultivated land, abundantly watered, and between fields of wheat, cotton, millet, maize and sorgum.' Goes arrived on 17 October 1604 and left on 17 November of that year.
  - 38 There is a large literature on Goes. A very satisfactory account is in C. Wessels SJ, *Early Jesuit Travellers*, pp. 1–44. C.H. Payne, *Jahāngīr and the Jesuits* (London, 1930), pp. 119–82, has made available the accounts provided by P. du Jarric and F. Guerreiro SJ. See Bibliography.
  - 39 Hernandez, *Jeronimo Javier SJ*, p. 205.
  - 40 C.H. Payne, *Jahāngīr and the Jesuits*, p. 3.
  - 41 The story is told in many of the sources in considerable detail, among others by C.H. Payne, *Jahāngīr and the Jesuits*, pp. 16–23, following Guerreiro, *Relaçam*,

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- part iv. Payne adds, p. 24, that the elder of the two about the year 1620 attained to a position of some importance in the service of the state. See further on the history of this young man, chap. 15, pp. 384-6.
- 42 Maclagan, *Jesuits*, p. 73.
- 43 Hernandez, p. 230, quoting a letter of 19 October 1610, in ARSI, Goa 33, 1, f. 336v.
- 44 Hernandez, p. 232. Apparently both Sir Thomas Roe and Edward Terry believed that their defection was due to the failure to secure for them Portuguese wives.
- 45 Maclagan, p. 94 n. 26.
- 46 Hernandez, p. 241, from ARSI, Goa 33, 1, f. 389.
- 47 Hernandez, pp. 245-7, from ARSI, Goa 46, f. 81-2.
- 48 Maclagan, p. 84.
- 49 Some have doubted whether this appointment was actually made. Hernandez discusses the matter in detail, pp. 9-11. The evidence he produces should settle the matter once and for all; the facts are as stated in the text.
- 50 Details in Hernandez, pp. 6-7. On pp. 301-14 Hernandez gives the Latin text of the original report to the general on the death of Xavier, dated 31 January 1618. For an estimate of his character and abilities, see the report sent to the general in 1614, p. 289 and n. 8, in which the original Latin text is given. He is described as *cholericus-sanguineus*.
- 51 Quoted by Hernandez, p. 294, from ARSI, Goa 33, 11, f. 455.
- 52 *A Voyage to East India* (ed. of 1771), p. 423.
- 53 See Appendix 28. Winternitz in his survey of the European approach to Sanskrit studies, *Geschichte*, Eng. trans. vol. 1 (Calcutta, 1927), pp. 8-23, does not mention Roth.
- 54 Letter of 4 October 1667 to Monsieur Chapelain in *Travels in the Mogul Empire AD 1656-1668*, A. Constable and V.A. Smith (ed. of 1914), pp. 300-49. On p. 329 Bernier states that 'I was acquainted with the Reverend Father Roa (*sic*) . . . who had made great proficiency in the study of Sanskrit.'
- 55 Published in Latin in 1667 and in French in 1670. This work was for many years one of the main sources of information about the East available in Europe.
- 56 C. Wessels SJ, *Early Jesuit Travellers*, p. 199 n. 2. Wessels refers to Fr Manuel do Valle, *Relação do Missião da Mogor del 1668* as evidence for Roth's extensive knowledge of Sanskrit. See Appendix 28.
- 57 *Jahāngīr and the Jesuits*, pp. xviii and xix. On strange rumours that Jahāngīr had been secretly baptised by Fr Corsi, or that he wished on his deathbed to become a Christian see the judicious summing up of Maclagan, p. 92.
- 58 It was this version which more than a century later came to the notice of the French scholar Anquetil-Duperron, through whose Latin translation of *Oupekhmat* the Upaniṣads were first made known to the western world.
- 59 Henry Uwers, a Dutchman, born in 1617, who had changed his name to Buys, Busi, or Busaeus. He died at Delhi in 1667.
- 60 F. Bernier, *Travels* (ed. of 1914), pp. 1-116.

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- 61 It is to be noted that the Mughul royal family was now, through many marriages with Indian ladies of high rank, almost entirely Indian. The various members of the family retained many gifts of mind and spirit; but they lacked the driving will and decisiveness which had made Bābur and Akbar great rulers. They were 'no longer able to cope with the hardy and turbulent tribesmen beyond the Hindu Kush', *CHI*, vol. IV, p. 215.
- 62 *Storia do Mogor*, vol. 1 (Eng. trans. London, 1907-8), pp. 324, 356-7. Manucci is highly explicit, but it cannot be said that his evidence is convincing.
- 63 Pandit Shri Narain in *JPHS*, 2 (1913), 21-38, 'Dārā Shukoh as an author', esp. p. 37; quoted by Maclagan, p. 120 n. 59.
- 64 On this, see *Encycl. of Islam*, vol. II (new ed. 1970), p. 566. The tax was abolished soon after the death of Aurungzib.
- 65 Maclagan, in his careful chapter on 'the Congregations', pp. 268-310, has tried to work out in detail the social status and the numbers of Christians in the Mughul empire. Exact figures are hard to come by; it is probable that the Christians under the care of the Fathers never numbered more than a thousand, and few among these were converts from Islam.
- 66 In the notable enterprise *Il Nuovo Ramusio* (Rome, Libreria dello Stato, 1952), part 1, 'Missionari Italiani nel Tibet e nel Nepal', ed. L. Petech, pp. i-xxii, there is a good short account of Western knowledge of Tibet in early days, and of the Jesuit approaches in the seventeenth century. In this the Tibetan names are given in the modern scientific orthography which presents problems to those who are not Tibetan scholars.
- 67 This is Srīnagar in Garwhal, not Srīnagar in Kashmir 500 miles to the north-west of it. Endless confusion has been caused by failure to distinguish between these two places.
- 68 Text given in full in Wessels, p. 66. Both Andrade and the rājā kept their promises.
- 69 His original name was Alain de la Beauchaire; he took a Portuguese name after coming to India in 1612.
- 70 Wessels, p. 75. G.M. Young, *JPHS*, 7 (1919), 185, 'A Journey to Toling and Tsaparang in Western Tibet' states that 'in course of time the king and most of the members of his family were baptized'; but adduces no supporting evidence. The whole article, pp. 177-98, is most interesting. Captain Young who made his journey in 1912, admits that his 'impressions of Toling and Tsaparang are necessarily those of a week-end tripper'; but adds 'My excuse for recording them is that Tsaparang has not had even another week-end tripper since the Jesuits left it nearly three centuries ago' (p. 177). But two travellers had been in Toling before Young (p. 188).
- 71 Wessels, p. 89. Captain Young concludes his article, after a reference to the survival of one cross in Tsaparang, with the words, 'In all else the work of destruction was complete, and nothing is left to remind one that a Christian once reigned in Tibet' (p. 198).
- 72 Wessels' account of Stephen Cacella and John Cabral, pp. 120-61, is of the same quality of interest as a high class detective story. For good measure he



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- prints the original documents, in Portuguese, in three appendices, pp. 283–336. It is regrettable that considerations of space have made it impossible to include here many interesting details.
- 73 At this point Fr Wessels departs a little from the sobriety of his narrative style: The reader is left to imagine the paths and passes buried under deep snow at an altitude of many thousand feet, and in the midst of these the lonely traveller with his one or two guides, whose language he hardly understands, and thence to form his judgement of the grit and intrepidity required to undertake it and carry it through (p. 157).
- 74 Wessels, p. 161. Cabral after a long and adventurous career as a missionary in many lands including Japan, died in Goa on 4 July 1669.
- 75 Almost all our information comes from Jesuit sources. Jesuits are not always easy customers to deal with, and cannot be relied on to be always completely impartial in what they write.
- 76 Quoted from V. Cordara, *Hist. Soc. Jesu*, vol. 1, pp. 261–2, by L. Besse SJ, *Mission de Maduré* (Tiruchirāpalli, 1914), p. 419 n. 1.
- 77 Besse, p. 440.
- 78 The seven centres are Tuticorin, Punnaikāyal, Vīrapāṇḍianpatnam, Tiruchendur, Manappādu, Vaippār and Vembār, all to this day great Parava centres.
- 79 Besse, p. 456.
- 80 Besse, p. 458. This shows up the great exaggerations which had become current. For instance, in a report of 1603 it was stated that the number of Parava Christians on the Fisher Coast alone is upwards of 50,000; this figure is repeated in a number of other sources.
- 81 Accounts of this raid are contradictory. F.C. Danvers, *The Portuguese in India* (London, 1894), states that on this occasion Tuticorin was occupied; but this seems not to have been the case.
- 82 This is discussed in A.J. de Jong's new edition of the *Afgoderye* of Philip Baldaeus (1917), pp. xxxix–lii.
- 83 Baldaeus, *Malabar en Choromandel*, p. 150, quoted by A.J. de Jong, p. xlvii. See also J. Hough, *History* (London, 1939–45), vol. III, pp. 7–9. Baldaeus had only an elementary knowledge of Tamil, and, as the Paravas were well aware that his aim was to change their faith, it was unlikely that they would be very communicative with him.
- 84 Letter of Fr Peter Martin of 1 June 1700, quoted by Besse, pp. 464–6.
- 85 Quoted by Besse, p. 465.
- 86 Secular priests were fairly numerous throughout the century; but their work hardly enters at all into the story of missions to the non-Christians in India.
- 87 Müllbauer, *Geschichte* (Freiburg i. B., 1952), p. 277.
- 88 Even Müllbauer has barely been able to fill a page with all that he has been able to find out about this mission, pp. 246–7.
- 89 Müllbauer, pp. 247–8. Müllbauer makes the interesting comment that the letters of the French Fathers, which begin now to appear in the *Lettres Édifiantes et Curieuses* are on the whole much more interesting than those of the Portuguese and Spaniards, since they embraced a wide range of topics, and do

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- not confine themselves, as did the others, solely to the missionary activity of the Fathers; though there is plenty about such activities also, as in the enormous letter written by Fr Peter Martin to Fr Le Gobien from Açour on 11 December 1700, *Lettres*, vol. 11 (ed. of 1840), pp. 285–304, esp. pp. 294–7.
- 90 The sufferings in Agra of Fr John of the Cross, Fr Antony of Christ, and Fr Francis of the Incarnation have been recorded in chap. 11, pp. 263–4.
- 91 Müllbauer, p. 343.
- 92 ‘Relazione dello Stato delle Congregazione e Missioni di Propaganda Fide’. This report appeared in English, and in French translation, published in Amsterdam in 1716 (‘État présent de l’Église romaine dans toute les parties du monde’, with a remarkable letter to the pope by the translator Richard Steele). I do not know whether the original Italian has ever been printed. Only pages 172–88 deal with India. On Cerri, see *Memoria Rerum*, vol. 1 (1977), pp. 263–4.
- 93 G.P. Maffei, *Historiarium Indicarum Libri XVI* (Antwerp, 1605), book XII, p. 326, quoted by Fr Felix Lopes OFM, *Conquista*, vol. 1, p. x.
- 94 The whole work has now been published in three volumes, ed. Fr Felix Lopes OFM (Lisbon, 1961ff). See also the Report prepared by Frey Clement de Santa Iria (Eyria) in 1724, ‘Noticia do que obravão os Frades de S. Francisco, . . . depois que paçavão a esta India Oriental’, printed in SR, *Doc.*, vol. v, pp. 395–513.
- 95 *Conquista*, vol. 1, pp. 264–5.
- 96 *The Ancient Franciscan Provinces in India 1500–1835* (Bangalore, 1971).
- 97 *Provinces*, pp. 78–88.
- 98 See decree of the Fourth Council of Goa in *Bull.*, vol. 1, Appendix, p. 123.
- 99 For a list prepared by Frey Clement de Santa Iria in 1724 see SR, *Doc.*, vol. v, pp. 495–6: ‘Noticia dos Religiosos da Provincia que compuzerão livros’.
- 100 *Provinces*, p. 82. The *Syntaxis Copiosissima* of Gaspar has been published by its discoverer, Dr José Pereira, in the *Journal of the University of Bombay* (1967), 1–155, with an introduction of the highest value. Dr Pereira refers to one of the Franciscans Ignatius Arcamone (1615–83) as having been the first to translate any part of the Bible into an Indian language – Konkani, *loc. cit.* p. 5.
- 101 But S. Silva, p. 5, does state that early in the seventeenth century the Franciscans built two churches in Kanara, and that one of their number was killed there in 1619. His authority is Fernando Soledade, *Historia Seraphica*, Tome III, chap. 9.
- 102 Note that these Carmelites are to be distinguished from the Carmelites sent directly from Rome to the Serra; these we have encountered in the section on the Thomas Christians. For an extremely unfavourable picture of Fr Peter Paul, see Ferroli, vol. 1, pp. 78–80. Ferroli is not always reliable in such matters.
- 103 Benedetto Odescalchi (1601–89, pope 1676).
- 104 According to Gams, *Series Episcoporum* s.v. Bombay, he had not been consecrated. For help rendered to Peter Paul by the English in Madras in 1686 see F. Penny, *Church in Madras* (London, 1904), vol. 1, p. 219.

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- 105 The details of the work of the Theatines are drawn by Müllbauer, pp. 350–8, from the full and careful work of B. Ferro, *Istoria delle missioni de' chierichi regolari Theatini* (2 vols., Rome, 1704–5).
- 106 See A. Meersman OFM, *The Franciscans in India* (Bangalore, 1957), p. 148.
- 107 Ferro, *Istoria*, vol. II, p. 334.
- 108 But from this commendation Fr John Milton has to be excluded, as will appear at a later point in this work.
- 109 J.B. Tavernier, *Travels in India*, ed. W. Crooke (2 vols., 1925), vol. I, pp. 176–86.
- 110 The story is told with further remarkable details by J. Hough, *History*, vol. II, pp. 418–19. His authority is the *Mémoires du P. Norbert*, vol. III, pp. 56–7. Norbert, like Habakkuk, was *capable de tout*, and no attention need be paid to his tarradiddle. The whole episode makes a very interesting study in the growth of a myth.
- 111 F. Penny, *The Church in Madras*, vol. I, p. 219. Fr Ephraim was still alive in 1693, but aged and infirm. In that year the government of Madras licensed a French Capuchin Louis de Olivéra as assistant to Fr Ephraim. Fr Zeno had died in 1687, aged eighty-five. Penny's whole chapter 11, 'The Company and the Roman Catholic Mission up to 1746' (pp. 217–42), is full of fascinating information about the Capuchins.

### 15 NON-ROMAN CATHOLIC CHRISTIANITY IN INDIA

- 1 The *Evangelisches Kirchenlexikon*, s.v. Grotius, characterises the work by the single word *Welterfolg*, a world success. It is notable that the Bodleian library at Oxford contains no less than thirty copies, in a variety of languages including Arabic – a clear sign of its popularity over two centuries.
- 2 Sir W. Foster, *The Embassy of Sir Thomas Roe to India 1615–1619* (Oxford, 1926<sup>2</sup>).
- 3 John Hall (1579–1616) matriculated at Magdalen Hall in Oxford in 1596, took his degree of MA in 1604, and BD in 1613. Otherwise little is known of him.
- 4 'This day' (19 August 1616) 'suddenly died, to my great grief and discomfort, my minister Mr Hall, a man of most gentle and mild nature, and of an unspotted life.' See W. Foster, *Embassy*, p. 216.
- 5 W. Foster, *Embassy*. An interesting point for textual critics; a number of those who have quoted Roe make him speak of God's 'holy sacraments'. It can hardly be doubted that Foster has given the correct version.
- 6 The factors seem to have been wrong. It was Hall who had been a fellow of Corpus Christi College. Terry had been a member of Christ Church, where he matriculated in 1608, became BA in 1611, and proceeded MA in 1614. There is a useful study of Terry in R.G. Prasad, *Early English Travellers in India* (Delhi, 1965), pp. 277–322.
- 7 He left Surat with the ambassador in February 1619, and so ended his life of travel. He spent many years as rector of Great Greenford in Middlesex and died in October 1660.

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- 8 It has been printed by Sir William Foster in *Early Travels in India 1583-1619* (1921), pp. 288-332.
- 9 Terry, *A Voyage to East India* (London, 1777), p. 325.
- 10 Terry, p. 331.
- 11 Bishop Gilbert Burnet seems to be the only authority for this story; but his account appears to be reliable, having been derived from the Swiss Stoupe, who had it from the Protector himself, with the expectation of being appointed as the secretary of the first province. *History of His Own Times* (ed. of 1875), pp. 42, 51.
- 12 For details see F. Penny, *The Church in Madras*, vol. 1 (London, 1904), p. 36, where a quotation from the *Court Minute Book*, 14 November 1660, p. 49, is given. Baxter desired that the Company would send out copies of the Arabic version of Grotius' *De Veritate* in order that Christianity may be established among the infidels there. 'The Court is ready to promote so pious a work, if they find that these books are allowed by authority.'
- 13 The letter is printed in full in F. Penny, vol. 1, pp. 95-6.
- 14 (Anon) *Life of Prideaux* (1748), pp. 161-83. See also *DNB*, vol. XLVI, pp. 354-6.
- 15 *Charters Relating to the East India Company from 1600 to 1761* (Madras, 1887), pp. 143-4. It is to be noted that this is from the charter granted to the new and independent *English* company. After ten years, in 1708, the new Company and the old were amalgamated, and the charter of 1698 with the necessary modifications became the charter of the united Company.
- 16 Note that in the contemporary documents, they are constantly referred to not as chaplains but as ministers, or even as *padries*, though this term is more often applied to the Roman Catholic priests. See Sir William Foster, *The English Factories in India* (Vols 1-13, Oxford, 1906-27), Indices, *passim*.
- 17 It was reprinted in an excellent edition, prepared by H.G. Rawlinson, in 1929.
- 18 The English, like the Dutch, followed the example of the Muslims in erecting immense sepulchres over their dead. Some of these can still be seen in the English graveyard at Surat.
- 19 The Rev. Philip Anderson, in *The English in Western India* (Bombay, 1856), p. 271n. remarks that 'on looking over copies of the remittance book, I find that the chaplains frequently remitted the whole of their salaries to England. How much more I cannot say.'
- 20 This seems to be referred to in a letter from the directors of 12 December 1677; As to money raised by you for charity by way of fines or otherwise, we would have an account kept thereof and yearly sent us; and, if there be any poor that have been in our service, and through age or otherwise rendered incapable of getting a livelihood, or the widows or children of such, let them be relieved therewith (See F. Penny, vol. 1, p. 76).
- 21 Quoted in Sir H. Yule, *The diary of William Hedges esq during his agency in Bengal*, vol. II (London, 1887), pp. 304-18. Masters adds that 'if any be Drunke or abuse the Natives they are to be Sett in Irons all the day time, and all the Night be tyed to a Post in the house'. The whole of the letter is worth reading.
- 22 Ovington, *A Voyage to Surat*, ed. H.G. Rawlinson (Oxford, 1929), p. 235.

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- 23 See F. Penny, vol. 1, pp. 69–70. For a fascinating description of a visit of the king of Golconda to a Dutch service (derived from D. Havart, *Op – en ondergang van Coromandel*, 1693), see H. Terpstra, *De Nederlanders*, pp. 72–4. The king caused some distress to the worshippers by continuously smoking a pipe ‘after the Persian fashion; but showed the greatest reverence to the Bible’.
- 24 Ovington, p. 237. The English in India were from the start notable toppers. There is a famous letter from the directors to the nineteen employees of the Company in Bencoolen in Sumatra, pointing out that to have consumed in a year seventy-four dozen bottles of wine, fifty dozen of French claret, twenty-four dozen of Burton, two pipes and forty-two gallons of Madeira, two hundred and seventy-four bottles of toddy, and one hundred and sixty-four gallons of Goa arrack might be regarded as a little excessive. They recommended a little tea boiled in water and kept till cool. E. Chatterton, *History of the Church of England in India* (London, 1924), p. 7.
- 25 Pepys wrote in his diary for 15 May 1663 concerning Bombay that ‘the Portugalls had choused them . . . it being, if we had it, but a poor place, and not really so as was described to our king in the draught of it but a poor little island’.
- 26 P. Anderson, pp. 139, 203.
- 27 Full details in W. Ashley Brown, *On the Bombay Coast and Deccan* (London, 1937), pp. 88–98, 138–46. Thomas Carr, the first bishop of Bombay was installed on 25 February 1838. See also J.L.C. Dart, *A History of the Cathedral Church of Bombay*. Ashley Brown gives a complete list of all chaplains who served in western India, pp. 269–71; thirty-three served during the period covered by this volume.
- 28 The requirement of an episcopal licence for chaplains in India was first imposed, under royal command, in 1685.
- 29 These include the remarkable statement *renuntiavi pacto vel foederi solemnni*, ‘I have repudiated the solemn league and covenant’ – of the Scottish Church.
- 30 All the relevant documents are printed in full in F. Penny, vol. 1, pp. 89–93. Calcutta had no church till 1709, in which year, on 5 June, the church of St Anne was consecrated.
- 31 F. Penny, vol. 1, p. 79.
- 32 F. Penny, vol. 1, p. 107.
- 33 This translation was published in 1695. See *Liturgy and Worship*, ed. W.K. Lowther Clarke (1932), p. 816.
- 34 George Lewis (so he spelt his name) served at Fort St George from 1692 to 1714, with great credit and much beloved by all. This is considerably longer than the usual period of service of chaplains in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.
- 35 Pring was commander of the fleet of 1617. Sir Thomas Roe had a high opinion of him. See his letter of 5 October 1617, beginning, ‘Honest Man, God that knows my heart witnesses that you are the wellcomest man to the country that could here arrive to assist my many troubles.’ *Embassy*, p. 389. There is an article on Pring in the *DNB*, in which he is described as a bad officer but a good navigator.

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- 36 W. Foster, *The English Factories in India, 1618–1621* (1906), pp. 32–3. (See also p. 19 for a letter from Sir Thomas Roe.) Goulding seems to have remained in Surat, from which his death is reported on 18 February 1620.
- 37 William Hedges was dismissed from his position with the Company at the end of 1683.
- 38 On this John Pitt, of the new English Company in Bengal, wrote sardonically to his old friend Sir Edward Littleton, also a well known Interloper: ‘I hear that our old Friend Doctor Evans is made Bishop of Bangor (alias Bengall) and ’tis said by your means. I am glad that you are so much in love with Bishoppes that you contribute to the making of ’em. Soe hope you’ll send him home a Super-fine piece of Muslin to make his Sleeves.’
- 39 Though not an archbishop, the bishop of Meath is ‘the Most Reverend’.
- 40 All that is known of Evans has been carefully collected in H.B. Hyde, *Parochial Annals of Bengal* (Calcutta, 1901), in which references for the above quotations will be found.
- 41 W. Foster, *English Factories, 1618–1621*, pp. 32–3.
- 42 No indication is given as to the area from which he came, of the language which he spoke, or of the caste to which he belonged. Best may have bought him as a slave.
- 43 This church no longer exists, its lineal successor being St Dionis’ Church, Parsons Green. There was at that time in the Prayer Book no service for the baptism of adults, this having been added only in 1662, because of the licentiousness of the late times and because of its potential use for the baptising of Natives in our Plantations (see the Preface to the Prayer Book of 1662). No note seems to have been made of any modifications in the service for the baptism of infants, when Peter was baptised.
- 44 In these letters Peter signs himself *Petrus Papa*. In various English accounts this is translated as Peter Pope, and it is stated that the odd surname as well as the Christian name was supplied by King James. But surely this is a mistake. The most likely explanation is that Papa is Peter’s recollection of his original Indian name, though what that may have been it is not easy to guess.
- 45 A full account of Peter and his baptism, including an English translation of the three letters written by him, is given by Rajaiah D. Paul, in his book *Triumphs of his Grace* (Madras, 1967), pp. 1–16. See also E. Chatterton, pp. 15, 16. The life of Copeland has been written by the American historian E.D. Neill, naturally with special reference to his services in Virginia: *Memoirs . . . of Patrick Copland* (New York, 1871). Further details in E.D. Neill, *The English Colonization of America in the Seventeenth Century* (London: Strachan, 1871).
- 46 Lord’s book is called *A Discovery of two Forraigne Sects in the East Indies, viz the Sect of the Banians, the ancient Natives of India, and the Sect of the Parsees, the ancient inhabitants of Persia; together with the Religion and Manners of each Sect*. This was published originally in 1630, and reprinted in vol. VI of Churchill’s *Collection of Voyages and Travels* (1752), pp. 313–56. The preface to the French translation asserts that during eighteen years in Surat Lord had devoted himself to careful and thorough investigation of the beliefs of the Hindus and Parsees.

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- R.C. Prasad, *Early English Travellers in India* (1965), p. 326, adds that he had learned their language. This seems to me improbable.
- 47 Works, vol. III (ed. of 1807), p. 30.
- 48 Churchill, pp. 332–3.
- 49 Churchill, p. 358.
- 50 Lord is unfair in calling the Parsis fire-worshippers; but this is an error which he shares with a great many of those who have written about them.
- 51 Factory Records, Fort St George, 20 August 1674, quoted by F. Penny, vol. I, p. 58.
- 52 T.G.P. Spear, *The Nabobs* (London, 1932), pp. 109–10.
- 53 Antony de Waele (1573–1639), professor of dogmatic theology in the university of Leiden from 1619 onwards. A well known controversialist, whose collected works were published in 1647 with a biography by his son. See *RGG*, vol. v, col. 1529; *RE*, vol. xx, col. 788–90 (Van Been, with an excellent bibliography). There is a dissertation on the college by J.A. Grothe (Utrecht, 1882), but this adds little to what is known from other sources.
- 54 For these see C.W.T. van Boetzelaer, *Protestantsche Kerk* (1947), pp. 141–2. For earlier signs of missionary interest, see J.A. de Jong, *Afgoderye* (1917), pp. xxxv–xxxvii.
- 55 C.R. Boxer, *The Dutch Sea-borne Empire 1600–1800* (1977), p. 134. This is confirmed by a remark quoted by Baron van Boetzelaer, *De Gereformeerde Kerken* (1906), p. 167, from the governor general, that ‘met deze jonge quanten meer fastidien als met andere predicanten ender subalterne voorkomen’.
- 56 Section 3 of Baron van Boetzelaer’s later book *De protestantsche Kerk in Nederlandsche Indië* (The Hague, 1947), pp. 50–78, has the sub-title ‘De volledige onderwerping der indische Kerk an de overheid’ – the complete subjection of the Indian church to the authorities.
- 57 Details in C.R. Boxer, pp. 137–8. See also van Boetzelaer, *Protestantsche Kerk*, pp. 61–2, who gives in full the decision of the xvii Heeren.
- 58 For bibliographical details see Appendix 29.
- 59 p. 85 of W. Caland’s excellent edition of 1915. As there was in the days of Rogerius no standardised system for the transliteration of Sanskrit or Tamil words, it is at times impossible, in the form in which he introduced them, to identify the words intended. Caland, pp. 210–13, gives a useful list of the Sanskrit words used, and also where possible the correct transliteration; the reader might have difficulty in recognising *dharmarājā* in *darmerason*, and *jyaisṭha* in *ieistam*.
- 60 Trans. A.C. Burnell, in *Ind. Antiquary*, 7 (1896), p. 99.
- 61 Paraphrase rather than translation. To show how far the Dutch of Rogerius departs from the Sanskrit, Caland gives, p. 209, an exact and literal translation of the first three stanzas.
- 62 Caland/Rogerius, p. xxii.
- 63 I have used the English translation reprinted in Churchill’s *Collection of Voyages and Travels*, vol. II (1752), pp. 509–793. The text is not quite complete; as is explained in the Preface, p. 512, ‘We have only this to add, that to avoid all

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- unnecessary prolixity, it was judged requisite to omit many digressions, tending not so much towards the elucidation of the history as (we suppose) to show the author's criticism (*sic*) in the holy Scripture.'
- 64 Baldaeus, p. 596. If taken alone, a very suitable text – 'The Lord thy God walketh in the midst of thy camp . . . therefore shall thy camp be holy.' If read with its context, it may provoke some mirth in the reader.
- 65 Baldaeus, p. 573.
- 66 Baldaeus, p. 584.
- 67 Baldaeus, pp. 587–8.
- 68 De Jong, p. lxxvii.
- 69 J. Charpentier in *BSOS*, 2 (1921–3), 752, and *Livro de Seita* (1935), pp. lxxxiii–lxxxv; for further details see Appendix 31.
- 70 H. Terpstra seems to be unaware of the extent to which the work of Baldaeus is based on plagiarism (pp. 187–91).
- 71 I have myself compared some extracts from the manuscript, as given by Professor Charpentier, with the text of Baldaeus; there can be no doubt at all as to the plagiarism.
- 72 See Appendix for details of the manuscript and of the use made of it by Baldaeus. The exposure of the plagiarism was made by Professor Charpentier in *BSOS*, 3 (1923–5), pp. 413–20: 'The Brit. Mus. MS. Sloane 3290, the Common Source of Baldaeus and Dapper'.
- 73 *BSOS*, 3, p. 420.
- 74 He cannot have known that Olfert Dapper, whose *Asia* appeared in 1672, had had access to another copy of the same manuscript, and had made extensive use of it in his work.
- 75 Charpentier, pungently and amusingly, makes plain that Baldaeus' knowledge of Portuguese was inadequate for the work that he had undertaken. *BSOS*, 2, p. 752; he has turned shell-fishers into monkey-hunters!
- 76 H. Terpstra adds the remark that 'the highly exotic plates must have contributed to the popularity of the work in our country', *De Nederlanders in Voor-Indië* (Amsterdam, 1947), p. 188.
- 77 For further information on the *Hortus*, and the contribution of Casarius to it, see Appendix 30.
- 78 Where is to be found one of the earliest Christian inscriptions in the Tamil country. See Appendix 2.
- 79 The Armenian church belongs to that group of churches (with Egypt, Ethiopia etc.) which did not accept the decisions of the council of Chalcedon in AD 451, and is called monophysite by those who do not agree with the position which it maintains.
- 80 Our authority for this is the account written by the Armenian quasi-historian Thomas Khojamall about the year 1768 and printed in 1849. Khojamall is in many respects inaccurate; but what he relates on this subject may be based on sound oral tradition; less probably, on written sources unknown to us.
- 81 This is all judiciously discussed by Maclagan, *Jesuits*, pp. 157–61.
- 82 After the death of his wife, Iskander desired to marry her sister, and was supported in this desire by Akbar; naturally such a breach of canon law brought



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- upon him the grave disfavour of the Jesuits; but by 1611 a dispensation for the marriage had been received from the pope, and Iskander was restored to favour. When he died in 1613, he was buried with much ceremony.
- 83 See chapter 15, pp. 384–6. The historical details relating to Zū'lqarnain have been collected by Fr H. Hosten SJ in a masterly article 'Mirzā Zū'lqarnain, a Christian Grandee', *MASB*, 5 (1917), pp. 115–94. More recent research has added hardly anything to the information collected by Fr Hosten. Mesrovb J. Seth in his *Armenians in India* (Calcutta, 1937), pp. 22–88, reprints the article with hardly any change other than the addition of a few footnotes.
- 84 It is possible that the family came originally from Mesopotamia rather than from Armenia. The Portuguese were accustomed to refer to all varieties of Eastern Christians as Armenians.
- 85 These are summarised by Maclagan, p. 174.
- 86 Fr Hull, quoted by Fr Hosten, p. 137 n. 1, is undoubtedly correct in suggesting that the Fathers followed the plan of obtaining landed property in Portuguese territory to avoid the difficulty caused in the dominions of the Great Mogul by the law under which all property on the death of the owner reverted to the emperor. It was not certain that church property would be exempted from such laws.
- 87 J. Seth, p. 67.
- 88 J. Seth, pp. 104–5.
- 89 J. Seth, pp. 22–3. Funeral inscriptions of all of these have been found in the cemetery at Agra. One laconic record reads simply: 'I, Reverend Zacharias of Tabriz, came in 1105' (=AD 1656). A memorial cross in the name of the same Zacharias has been found, and reads 'This holy cross is in memory of the Reverend Zacharias and of his parents Joseph and Maria and Sargiss in the year 1106' (AD 1657). Seth, pp. 108–9.
- 90 This entertaining tale is recorded in *Purchas: His Pilgrims*, vol. III (ed. of 1905), pp. 15–16; and an excellent edition is in W. Foster, *Early Travels*, pp. 60–121.
- 91 H.D. Love, *Vestiges of Old Madras* (1913), p. 543. The index to this invaluable work gives a number of references to Armenians over the years.
- 92 When the first Italian Capuchin missionaries arrived in Lhasa in 1707, they found there a number of Christians – Armenian, Russian and Chinese. They were made welcome by a powerful Armenian merchant, Khwāja Davith, who had been resident in the city for many years, and to whom they had been commended by Armenians in Patna. The Khwāja helped them to secure accommodation during the first period of their sojourn in Lhasa. See *Il Nuovo Ramusio*, vol. 1, p. xlv.

## NOTES TO APPENDICES

- 1 Gouvea, *Jornada* (Coimbra, 1606), book 1 chap. 1, pp. 17–18.
- 2 A shed of posts and palm leaf mats.
- 3 A somewhat different translation is given in Pothan, *The Syrian Christians of Kerala* (Bombay, 1963), p. 102.
- 4 An early account of all this is in P. Vincent Mary of S. Catherine of Siena,

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- Viaggio all'Indie-Orientali* (Rome, 1672), p. 135. He actually writes 'à guisa delle lettere Chinesi, ò delle gieroglifiche degli Egittij'.
- 5 (Lisbon, 1783), book x, chap. 5, p. 478. This is reproduced in *JPASB*, NS 21 (1925), pp. 507-48, 'The Martyrdom of St Thomas the Apostle', esp. pp. 516-17, Spanish version with English translation.
  - 6 *JPASB*, NS 19, pp. 205-8. The whole long article pp. 153-235 is full of learning; I do not, however, agree with all Fr Hosten's conclusions. Of great value is the reproduction on p. 206, of Fr Monserrate's sketch of the cross, and his 'malavar' transliteration of the Brāhman's rendering of the inscription.
  - 7 *JPASB*, NS 31 (1925), pp. 507-48.
  - 8 *Malabar Christians and their Ancient Documents* (Trivandrum, 1929).
  - 9 Rāmanātha Ayyar interprets *maraiyavar* as a title of respect for the Lord, and adds 'Lord Jesus' in parentheses.
  - 10 On the *Madhyamika* school of Buddhist philosophy, of which Nāgārjuna is one of the chief expositors, see S. Dasgupta, *History of Indian Philosophy* (Cambridge, 1922-55), 1, pp. 18-45. Note the saying (51 on p. 145): 'Know that attachment to religious ceremonies, . . . wrong views . . . and doubt . . . are the true fetters.' Note further that Nāgārjuna, a Brāhman, belongs to the Āryan and Sanskrit traditions of Indian thinking, and has nothing of the Dravidian about him.
  - 11 J.W. de Jong, *Cinq chapitres de la Prasannapadā* (Paris, 1949), p. xi. De Jong, who prints also the Tibetan translation of the *Prasannapadā*, adds that almost all scholars have 'considered Nāgārjuna exclusively as a philosopher, and have tended too much to forget that he was above all a fervent believer'.
  - 12 This must be regarded as dubious; both in Ceylon and in Burma the *Theravāda* was successful in maintaining itself as the religion of the learned and the uneducated alike.
  - 13 *History and Culture*, 3, *The Classical Age* (1954), pp. 240-1.
  - 14 'Four Ancient Tamil Inscriptions in Tirukkalukunram' in *Epigraphia Indica*, 3 (1894-5), pp. 276-86.
  - 15 Madras edition, part II, p. 316 v. 6.
  - 16 *ibid.* p. 318, vv. 23, 24.
  - 17 Trans. F. Kingsbury and G.E. Phillips, *Hymns of the Tamil Saivite Saints* (Mysore, 1921), p. 29.
  - 18 *ibid.* p. 27.
  - 19 *Ind. Antiq.*, XXII, p. 63, where references to the *Periyapurāṇam* are given.
  - 20 *Origin and Early History of Śaivism in South India* (1936), p. 462.
  - 21 pp. 332-3.
  - 22 *Eastern Churches Review*, 8, pp. 162-73.
  - 23 *Cartas de Affonso de Albuquerque*, vol. II, p. 282, quoted in C.R. Boxer, *Race Relations* (Oxford, 1963), pp. 41-2.
  - 24 L. Wachmann, *Las bulas alexandrinas de 1493 y la teoria politica del Papado medieval* (Mexico, 1949).
  - 25 In his *Commentary on Decretals III*, quoted with full references by W. Ullmann, *Medieval Papalism* (1949), p. 119 and n. 2. The whole chapter 5 'World

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- Monarchy' is an admirable discussion of the medieval theory of papal power. According to *Encycl. Brit.* (1959) s.v. 'Deep (*sic*) legalistic in outlook, Innocent went beyond his predecessors in claiming for the papacy a direct temporal sovereignty over all earthly kingdoms.'
- 26 A. da Silva Rêgo, *O Padroado Português do Oriente* (Lisbon, 1940), p. 25.
  - 27 SR, *Doc.*, vol. v, Introd. p. xi.
  - 28 J. Correia d'Afonso, *Jesuit letters and Indian History* (Bombay, 1955), pp. 35-6.
  - 29 The full title, reads, in English: *Edifying and Curious Letters written from the Foreign Missions by some missionaries of the Society of Jesus*. In the reprint of 1780-3, the letters from the Indies fill six volumes.
  - 30 Xavier means of course Tamil, and not as might be expected Malayalam. By a curious error, then and for long after Malabaric was used in this erroneous sense.
  - 31 *Biscaine*; one later manuscript reads 'Celtiberica, vulgo Vasquenza'; the meaning in both cases seems to be the same.
  - 32 'My language' Basque: 'our language' Portuguese, in which most of the letters of Xavier to his brethren are written.
  - 33 EX, vol. I, pp. 162-3. Schurhammer, *Fr. Xav.* (Eng. trans.), II, pp. 406-7. *Xaveriana*, p. 342.
  - 34 A good English version of the letters, based on the modern and more reliable texts, is greatly to be desired.
  - 35 *Mon. Xav.*, vol. II, p. 896.
  - 36 It seems that an exception must be made in favour of Colonel Francis Wilford, who lived in Benares from 1788 to 1822. For details see Maclagan, *Jesuits* (London, 1932), pp. 51-2, and p. 156 n. 4.
  - 37 The Latin text of the *Commentarius* was published by H. Hosten SJ, in MASB, 3 (1914), pp. 513-704, with valuable introduction and notes. Fr Hosten had published in 1912 (*JASB*, pp. 185-221), a much shorter account written by Monserrate in 1582. There is an English translation of the *Commentarius* by J.S. Hoyland and S.N. Banerjee (Oxford, 1922), with useful notes. This is a valuable work, but has to be used with some caution. Jarl Charpentier, in a careful review in *BSOAS*, 3, 1923-5, pp. 191-5, points out a number of misunderstandings of Monserrate's Latin, and other errors, concluding his report with the words 'the difficulties of the undertaking have perhaps been too great to be coped with during the amount of time which may possibly have been at the disposal of the editors'.
  - 38 On the work of Guadagnoli, in Latin and in Arabic, see Camps, *Jerome Xavier and the Muslims of the Mogul Empire* (Schönebeck-Beckeried, 1957), pp. 176-7 and Maclagan, p. 208.
  - 39 The prayer in its entirety is quoted in Maclagan, *Jesuits*, p. 207.
  - 40 The later history will show that Valignano was unduly optimistic in his estimate of the Christians of the Fisher Coast; but it seems right to let his rather glowing picture stand.
  - 41 *Council of Trent*, IX (ed. Soc. Goerresiana), p. 979.
  - 42 The decrees are printed in *Bull.* Appendix I, pp. 6-29.

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- 43 Decrees printed in *Bull.* Appendix 1, pp. 37–56.
- 44 On this Council, see J. Wicki SJ, 'Quellen zum 3 Provinzial Konzil von Goa, 1585', *Ann. Hist. Concil.*, 5 (Paderborn, 1973), pp. 352–407.
- 45 *Bull.* p. 77.
- 46 Melo, *The Recruitment and Formation of the Native Clergy* (Lisbon, 1955), p. 185.
- 47 Decree 30.
- 48 *Bull.* Appendix, p. 101.
- 49 *Bull.* Appendix, p. 129.
- 50 *Bull.* Appendix, p. 123.
- 51 Melo, p. 146.
- 52 On this see *Il Nuovo Ramusio*, vol. II (1952), pp. xx–xxi. John Grueber and Albert d'Orville arrived in Lhasa on 8 October 1661, and in Agra in March 1662. D'Orville died in Agra almost immediately after their arrival.

## Select Bibliographies

### GENERAL

Hambye, E.R. 'A Bibliography of Christianity in India' (The Church History Association of India, 1976) (mimeographed)

This valuable work of twenty-five years includes thousands of references. It is completer for Roman Catholic work than for that of other churches. Carefully classified under headings, it does not distinguish between more and less important sources; some of the periodical references are to contributions of only local or temporary interest. But no other bibliography approaches this in completeness.

Mahar, J.M. *India, a Critical Bibliography* (Tucson, Arizona: Univ. of Arizona Press, 1964)

This is well planned and accurate. Ninety entries in English (pp. 75-97) deal with religion. It is adequate on Hinduism, weak on Christianity and Islam.

For the historian of Christianity in India, two compendia are indispensable:

*Bibliotheca missionum*, ed. J. Dindiger OMI, R. Streit OMI, later J.B. Rommerskirchen OMI.

The volumes specially dealing with India are:

BM VI 'Missionsliteratur Indiens, der Philippinen, Japans und Indochinas, 1700-1799' (Aachen, 1931)

BM VIII 'Missionsliteratur Indiens und Indonesiens, 1800-1909' (Aachen, 1934)

BM XXVII 'Missionsliteratur Indiens, 1910-1946' (Rome, Freiburg, Vienna, 1970)

BM XXVIII 'Missionsliteratur Südasiens (Indien, Pakistan, Birma, Ceylon), 1947-1968' (Rome, Freiburg, Vienna, 1971)

*Bibliografia Missionaria* (Rome: Pontificia Universitas Urbaniana, 1933- )

Prior to this date, from 1926 to 1933, a general survey of missionary literature had been published annually by J.B. Rommerskirchen OMI in *Zeitschrift für Missionswissenschaft*.

Among the innumerable missionary periodicals, two stand out as specially useful for bibliographical purposes:

## *Select Bibliographies*

*International Review of Missions* (1912-68; since 1969 of *Mission*)

Reviews are numerous, and the classified bibliography is extensive.

*Neue Zeitschrift für Missionswissenschaft* (1945- )

This is the best missionary research journal in the world.

Reference should also be made to:

*Missiology* (U.S.A.)

*Missionalia* (South Africa)

*The Indian Church History Review* (1967- )

This is the fruit of the newly awakened interest in history among Christians in India. The articles are of unequal value. Regrettably the great majority of the contributions are by westerners and not by Indians.

### *History*

On all matters connected with the history of India, the student must now turn to:

*The History and Culture of the Indian People*, ed. R.C. Majumdar (11 vols, Bombay: Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, 1951-77).

The production of these eleven volumes in thirty-three years between the first planning in 1944 and the publication of the final volume to appear (VIII) is a notable achievement; still more so when it is recalled that one single editor oversaw the whole process and laid down his pen, at the age of eighty-eight, on 2 October 1976.

The general standpoint, expressed in the words 'The modern historian of India must approach her as a living entity with a central continuous urge, of which the apparent life is a mere expression', has led to some underplaying of the influences which have affected the life of India from without; and naturally the chapters are uneven in execution. But nowhere else has such a mass of information about every aspect of the history of India been gathered together. The bibliographies, though not all equally well planned, are in many cases excellent and up to date.

*The Cambridge History of India* (6 vols, Cambridge, 1922-37. Vol. II has never appeared)

This is still indispensable. Vol. I is a pioneer work of first class importance. The chapters are uneven in workmanship, but a number are of high excellence. The complaint has been made that this is basically 'administrator's history', and for this objection there is some foundation. But this is not the whole story, as is evident from a study of the plates with which vol. IV, 'The Mughul Period', is adorned.

*The Oxford History of India*, ed. Percival Spear (Oxford, 1967<sup>3</sup>)

An excellent compendium, specially valuable for the selected list of authorities for each section.

*Pelican History of India*, vol. I, R. Thapar (to 1526) (Harmondsworth, 1966); vol. II, P. Spear (to 1960) (Harmondsworth, 1965)

## General

The *Pelican History* is modern in style and outlook. Both volumes are provided with outstanding bibliographies. R. Thapar has made good use of inscriptional materials, and stresses the social and economic, rather than the political and administrative, sides of history.

Elliot, Sir H.M., and Dowson, J. *The History of India as told by its own historians: The Muhammadan Period* (London: Trübner, 1867-77)

This work has been influential in all later writing on the Muslim period, as making readily available much material which otherwise would be almost inaccessible. Its effects are plainly to be seen in the volumes of the *Cambridge History* which deal with this period.

The work has now to be read with the extensive commentary of:

Hodtvala, S.H. *Studies in Indo-Muslim History: A Critical Commentary on Elliot and Dowson's History of India* (vol. I, Bombay, 1939; vol. II, Bombay, 1957)

Hodtvala disclaims any intention of doing anything 'to disparage or detract from this monumental performance'; but has taken the opportunity to correct many errors which have crept in, and to discuss many doubtful or controverted points. Older works deserving special mention are:

Mill, J. *History of British India* (continued up to 1835 by H.H. Wilson) (10 vols, London, 1858)

Mill's work was compared by Macaulay to Gibbon's *History*. It is still indispensable for detailed study of the period which it covers. Based on Utilitarian principles, and designed as a manual to guide and direct British administrators in India, it has been blamed as having seriously distorted the views on India of English readers. See C.H. Philips in *Historians of India, Pakistan and Ceylon* (Oxford, 1962<sup>2</sup>, 1967<sup>3</sup>), pp. 217-30.

Elphinstone, Mountstuart *History of India in the Hindu and Mahomedan Periods* (London, 1841, 1905<sup>9</sup>)

Based on personal knowledge, this book is written with far deeper sympathy and understanding than that of Mill. Since the ninth edition was published in 1905, it is clear that this penetrating account by one who was himself a notable ruler of men has never lost its power to attract and to illuminate the reader.

His *History of British Power in the East* was never finished.

Philips, C.H. (ed.) *Historians of India, Pakistan and Ceylon* (Oxford, 1961, 1962<sup>2</sup>, 1967<sup>3</sup>)

The book is a fascinating study, by twenty-eight writers, of history-writing in and on India in many languages and many periods.

## Culture

*The Cultural Heritage of India*<sup>2</sup> (4 vols, Rāmkrishna Mission, Calcutta): vol. I (1958); vol. II (1962); vol. III (1953); vol. IV (1956) ('The Religions')

An enterprise of the Rāmkrishna Mission, this book is not in all respects satisfactory.

## *Select Bibliographies*

Renou, L., and Filliozat, J. *L'Inde Classique: Manuel des Etudes Indiennes* (2 vols, Paris: Payot, 1947, 1953)

This is a marvellous encyclopaedia of all things Indian, remarkably complete on the earlier period, but not including western contacts and Christianity. The two volumes lack bibliography and index, which have been promised for a third volume.

Garratt, G.T. (ed.) *The Legacy of India* (Oxford, 1937)

Some of the chapters in this book are of great excellence. But the changed political situation, the progress of research, and the increased contribution of Indian scholars to the understanding of India, have made a number of the chapters seriously out of date.

Basham, A.L. (ed.) *A Cultural History of India* (Oxford, 1975)

This was planned to replace *The Legacy of India*, but has grown into a book of much greater size. It does not in all respects fulfil expectations. Two lines, on p. 495, are hardly adequate as a recognition of the existence of a Christian community in India.

### *Introduction*

Basham, A.L. *The Wonder that was India. A Survey of the History and Culture of the Indian Sub-continent before the coming of the Muslims* (London: Sidgwick and Jackson, 1954; 3rd rev. ed. 1967)

This is undoubtedly the best introduction for the general reader. Its limitations in time must be noted. But, for the period it covers, it deals with almost everything, is fair, balanced, reliable and sympathetic. It is to be commended for having paid reasonable attention to South India. On pp. 345–6 Basham refers to the tradition of Christians in India at a very early date.

### *Religion*

Farquhar, J.N. *An Outline of the Religious Literature of India* (Oxford, 1920; reprint 1976, Orient. Book Distr.)

This work is an astonishing achievement. In the Foreword, Farquhar states correctly that 'no attempt has ever been made to deal with the religious history as an undivided whole which must be seen as one long process of development before the meaning of the constituent sects or religions can be fully understood'. Farquhar made the attempt, and made it with such success that his book marks a turning-point in the history of the study of religion in India. The book is still one of those few which have to be marked 'indispensable', as providing 'a clear comprehensive survey of the literature so far as critical inquiry, translations, and the publication of texts have made it known' (p. x).

### *Christianity*

Naturally India has a place in all general histories of the Christian church and of missions. In this field, nothing can as yet compare with:



## General

Latourette, Kenneth Scott *A History of the Expansion of Christianity* (7 vols, London: Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1939-45)

But, having made the *Expansion* his theme, Latourette did not feel himself committed to writing in any detail about the Thomas Christians; so one major section of Indian Christianity just falls out of his picture. The sections in his work which deal with India during the period under review are: vol. I (1939), pp. 231-3, bibl. p. 390; vol. II (1939), pp. 280-4, bibl. pp. 464, 471-2; vol. III (1940), pp. 247-71. (Bibl. here is alphabetical, and not by countries; but full references are given in the notes.)

*Histoire Universelle des Missions catholiques* directed by Mgr S. Delacroix (4 vols, Paris: Libraire Grund, 1956-8)

This great work is disappointing. The illustrations are excellent, and there are some outstanding chapters. But the work is very uneven, and many important themes are hardly touched. The sections which are relevant to this volume are: vol. I, chap. 9, 1, 'L'Expansion portugaise', pp. 223-39; chap. 10, 'St François Xavier', pp. 269-85 (but mainly about Japan); vol. II, chap. 2, 'Le P. de Nobili et les missions de l'Inde', pp. 38-52; Chap. 5, 'L'éveil missionnaire de la France', 2. 'En Perse et aux Indes', pp. 97-101; Chap. 7, 'Les Vicaires apostoliques 1626-1689', pp. 132-64; Chap. 9, 'Les Missions de l'Inde après 1656', pp. 181-202.

Neill, S.C. *A History of Christian Missions* (Harmondsworth, 1964, 1975<sup>3</sup>)

Schmidlin, J. *Katholische Missionsgeschichte* (Steyl, 1924), pp. 234-50 (with useful bibliography of older works). Eng. trans. by M. Braun (Techny, Illinois, 1935) with some additions and revisions, which make it a useful supplement to the original work.

Histories of Christianity in India, including all aspects of the theme, can be counted on the fingers of one hand.

Hough, J. *A History of Christianity in India from the commencement of the Christian Era*, vols I-IV (London: R.B. Seeley, 1839-45), vol. V, ed. by his son, T.G.P. Hough (London, 1860)

This work stands in a class by itself. Hough manifests a wonderful knowledge of the materials as far as these were available at the time of writing. He is rarely wrong in his facts; but his strong bias against Roman Catholic missions makes of his work at times a tractate rather than a history. And he breaks off just before the beginning of the great expansion of missions.

No one else tried to treat all forms of Christian faith in India in balance until the excellent little book of:

Firth, C.B. *An Introduction to Indian Church History*, Christian Students' Library (Madras, 1961<sup>2</sup>)

The work is stronger in the earlier than in the later sections; since 1961 much work has been done on the later periods, and Mr Firth was unfamiliar with a good deal that had been done before that date.

Almost all the other books that can be named deal with either Roman Catholic or

### *Select Bibliographies*

Protestant missions, and the Thomas Christians are often omitted, or given merely cursory treatment.

On the Roman Catholic side, nothing compares in thoroughness and reliability with:

Müllbauer, M. *Geschichte der katholischen Missionen in Ostindien von der Zeit Vasco da Gamas bis zur Mitte des achtzehnten Jahrhunderts* (Freiburg i. B., 1852)

Every subsequent writer has pillaged Müllbauer; but of course a great deal has happened since the date at which he wrote. His bibliography of earlier works is of the greatest value.

On the Protestant side:

Richter, J. *Indische Missionsgeschichte* (2nd much improved German ed., 1924); Eng. trans. of first ed., *A History of Protestant Missions in India* (Edinburgh: Oliphant, 1908)

This is the best available work. Richter does pay some attention to work other than that of the Protestant missions; but for the most part he sticks to the task indicated in his title.

Thomas, P. *Christians and Christianity in India and Pakistan* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1954)

This has the advantage of having been written by an Indian Christian; but the author's prejudice against the West distorts his presentation and makes his judgement unreliable.

Among general surveys the following may be mentioned:

Kaye, J.W. *Christianity in India: a historical narrative* (London: Smith Elder, 1859)

Moraes, G.M. *A History of Christianity in India, from early times to St Francis Xavier AD 25-1542* (Bombay, 1964)

The book is well written by a journalist, who, however, puts forward a number of views which have not met with general acceptance.

Perumalil, A.C., and Hambye, E.R. *Christianity in India: A History in Ecumenical Perspective* (Alleppey, 1972)

The work does not quite live up to its title, being rather heavily slanted on the Roman Catholic side. Some of the chapters are barely adequate.

Smith, G. *The Conversion of India, from Pantaenus to the present day AD 193-1893* (London; Edinburgh, 1893)

#### CHAPTER I THE INDIAN BACKGROUND

One work of general survey is so good as to serve as an excellent introduction to the world of Indian religion, as briefly surveyed in this chapter:

## Chapter 1

Winternitz, M. *Geschichte der indischen Literatur* (3 vols, Leipzig, 1908–20)  
(English translation: vol. I, Calcutta, 1927; vol. II, Calcutta, 1933; vol. III I,  
Delhi, 1963, III II, Delhi, 1967)

The quotations given in the text are so well chosen as to afford many vivid insights into the development of Indian religion.

For the literatures of India, all previous efforts have been cast into the shade by the great series:

*A History of Indian Literature* (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz)

Sixteen sections of this work have already been published.

Vol. I Fasc. 1 (1975), *Vedic Literature: Saṃhitās and Brāhmaṇas* is by Jan Gonda. The book is marked, like all his writings, by erudition, sympathy and lucidity. Gonda affirms that the Vedic view of life is 'based on the belief in an inextricable co-ordination of what we could call nature, human society, ritual and the sphere of myth and the divine; on the belief also that these spheres influence each other continuously' (p. 93).

Vol. I Fasc. 2 (1977), *The Ritual Sūtras* is also by Jan Gonda.

### Religion

In *Die Religionen der Menschheit*, vols XI, XII, XIII on Indian religions are to be mentioned with almost unstinted praise:

*Die Religionen Indiens:*

Vol. I, *Veda und ältere Hinduismus*, by Jan Gonda (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1960)

Vol. II, *Der jüngere Hinduismus*, by Jan Gonda (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1963)

Vol. III, *Buddhismus – Jīnismus – Primitivvölker*, by André Barreau, Walther Schubring, and Christoph von Füren-Haimendorf (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1964)

The bibliographies are excellent. It is to be hoped that a complete English translation may soon be available. It is to be noted that Islam is not treated in these volumes: information about Islam in India has to be sought elsewhere.

### The Indus Valley Civilisation

Of general books on this subject, by far the best is still:

Wheeler, Mortimer *The Indus Valley Civilisation* (Supplementary Volume to the *Cambridge History of India*, 1968<sup>3</sup>)

The bibliography in *History and Culture of the Indian People* (vol. I, pp. 533–7) is remarkably complete up to the date of publication, 1951. (See pp. 3–5)

For an even earlier period the best general work is:

Allchin, B. and R. *The Birth of Indian Civilization: India and Pakistan before 500 BC* (Harmondsworth, 1968)

Piggott, S. *Prehistoric India to 1000 BC* (London: Cassell, 1962<sup>2</sup>)

Although an older book, this is still useful.

## Select Bibliographies

Narasimhaiah, B. *Neolithic and Megalithic Cultures in Tamil Nadu* (Delhi, 1980)  
Carrying the story back to the third millennium BC has shown how much archaeological work in South India may have to reveal of the earliest days of human habitation in India.

### *The Vedic Age*

We now have as a comprehensive survey of the Vedic world in the broad sense of the term:

Panikkar, Raimundo (ed.) *The Vedic Experience: Mantramañjarī: An Anthology of the Vedas for Modern Man and Contemporary Celebration* (London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 1977, 1979<sup>2</sup>)

Nearly 900 pages of extracts, arranged according to themes, introduce the reader to almost every aspect of Vedic life and thought. But naturally the selectors have been inclined to choose that which is excellent and memorable, and the picture is a good deal less than complete. The translations are well done. Extensive introductions, notes and comments swell the volume, but help the reader to find his way.

### *Vedas*

Keith, A.B. *The Religion and Philosophy of the Veda and Upaniṣads* (2 vols, Harvard U.P., 1925)

For the *Vedas* and *Upaniṣads* this is still unsurpassed. The writer's aim, 'the account of Vedic religion given in this work will, I trust, do something to restore to that religion its just place in the study of theology' (p. ix), has been amply fulfilled. Very full attention is paid to ritual. The *Upaniṣads* are treated on pp. 489–600.

Chap. 29 'Greece and the Philosophy of India', p. 601, starts with the ringing statement; 'It is not to be thought that the early philosophy of Greece exercised any influence on the philosophy of India.' Nor is any influence of Indian thought on Greece to be readily accepted.

Griswold, H. de W. *The Religion of the Rigveda* (London, 1923; Indian reprint, Delhi, 1971)

This is briefer, but also based on a thorough knowledge of the text.

### *Upaniṣads*

For a complete exposition of the *Upaniṣads*, the student is still almost bound to go to:

Deussen, P. *Sechzig Upaniṣads des Veda* (Leipzig, 1897)

As Hume says, the book 'brings to bear an extensive, critical and appreciative knowledge of European and of Indian philosophy'.

Many translations and studies of the *Upaniṣads* are available:

Hume, R.E. *The Thirteen Principal Upaniṣads* (Oxford, 1921, 1962<sup>5</sup>; paperback, 1971)

## Chapter 1

This can be commended as careful, generally accurate and readable. The bibliography up to the date of the publication of the 2nd edition, 1930, is exceptionally good and full, with comments on each work.

Radhakrishnan, S. *The Principal Upaniṣads, with Introduction, Text, Translation and Notes* (London: Geo. Allen and Unwin, 1953)

The Sanskrit text is given in transliteration. The notes are somewhat extensive, and the introduction is full. Eighteen *Upaniṣads* are included.

### *Bhagavadgītā*

Editions and translations of the *Gītā* are innumerable. Mention should be made of the comprehensive work of:

Edgerton, F. (2 vols, Harvard U.P., 1946)

This has a literal translation, so literal as at times to be hardly intelligible, opposite the Sanskrit text in transliteration.

My own favourite is:

Hill, W.D.P. *The Bhagavadgītā: an English translation and Commentary* (Oxford, 1928; ed. without the Sanskrit text, 1953; 1966<sup>2</sup>)

Radhakrishnan, S. *Bhagavadgītā* (London: Geo. Allen and Unwin, 1948)

This translation is perhaps less distinguished than some of his other work.

Zaehner, R.C. *The Bhagavad-Gītā with a commentary based on the original sources* (Oxford, 1969, reprinted 1972)

Included is the Sanskrit text in transliteration, a continuous translation (pp. 45–109) and an exposition of each stanza at considerable length. (See esp. p. 285 on *bhakti*, with Christian comparisons.)

### *Buddhism*

Conze, E. *Buddhist Thought in India: Three Phases of Buddhist Philosophy* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1962)

This is a useful introduction.

For the history of Buddhism in India, one work stands out beyond all others:

Lamotte, E. *L'histoire du bouddhisme indien des origines à l'ère Saka* (Louvain: Bibl. du Muséon, 1958)

The writer says that his aim is 'to replace Buddhism in the historical framework which it lacked, to draw it out of the world of ideas, to which of its own free will it had confined itself, in order to bring it back to earth' (p. vi). The bibliographical references are remarkably complete. This great book is unfortunately not available in English.

Oldenberg, H. *Buddha*, 13th ed., by H. von Glasenapp (Stuttgart, 1958)

This work, which first appeared in 1881, still offers the best approach to the whole subject. The 13th edition includes valuable additions by the editor.

## *Select Bibliographies*

The earlier translation by W. Hoey (London: Williams and Norgate, 1882) was long out of print in England; but for an Indian reprint see:  
*The Buddha, his life, his order, his doctrine* (Ind. Pub. Service, 1971)

This has to be balanced by:

Thomas, E.J. *The Life of Buddha as Legend and History* (London: Kegan Paul, 1927)

'The Pāli itself is no primitive record, but the growth of a long tradition in one school. The Sanskrit needs to be equally closely analysed' (p. v).

### *Jainism*

For Jainism, the best authority is:

Schubring, W. *Die Lehre der Jainas nach den alten Quellen dargestellt (Grundriss* III, 7, Berlin, 1935); Eng. trans. *The Doctrine of the Jainas* (Delhi, 1962)

There is a shorter account by the same writer in:

*Die Religionen Indiens*, vol. III, pp. 217-42

There is a clear and useful summary in:

Renou and Filliozat *L'Inde Classique* (Ecole française de l'extrême orient, 2 vols, Paris, 1947-9, 1953), vol. II, cols. 2387-93 (pp. 609-64)

Stevenson, Mrs Sinclair. *The Heart of Jainism* (Oxford, 1915)

This is a remarkably objective account by a sympathetic missionary.

### *Hinduism*

The subject is so vast and varied that it is best studied in its various manifestations.

There are a great many general accounts of Hinduism, but for the most part these reflect the interests and point of view of the writer, and are not of great help to the reader who has never lived in India.

One work is quite outstanding:

Monier-Williams, M. *Brahmanism and Hinduism; or Religious Life and Thought in India* (London: John Murray, 1891<sup>4</sup>)

Though the first edition of this appeared nearly a century ago, it has stood the test of time remarkably well. It is well-written and easy to read, and gives more space than most books of this kind to the way in which the adherents of the Indian religions actually live and worship.

### *Philosophy*

The best general account is still:

Dasgupta, S. *A History of Indian Philosophy* (5 vols, Cambridge, 1922-55)

The period covered in this volume (and beyond) is dealt with in vols I and II. Dr Dasgupta did not quite complete his work.

## Chapter 2

A rather good introduction is:

Hiriyanna, M. *Essentials of Indian Philosophy* (London: Geo. Allen and Unwin, 1949, with a useful glossary of Sanskrit terms)  
*Outlines of Indian Philosophy* (London: Geo. Allen and Unwin, 1932)

A more popular, and less profound, study than Dasgupta, is:

Radhakrishnan, S. *Indian Philosophy* (2 vols, London: Geo. Allen and Unwin, 1929<sup>2</sup>)

The first volume covers the period dealt with in this volume (*Upaniṣads*, pp. 137-270).

Two important aspects of ancient Indian life remain to be looked at:

### *Caste*

The recognised authority, based on a comprehensive study of the evidence is:

Hutton, J.H. *Caste in India; its Nature, Functions and Origins* (Oxford, 1946; 1961<sup>3</sup>; 1963<sup>4</sup>)

The writer does his best to be fair, but has not quite succeeded in bringing all his complex material into a unified whole.

A different view from that of Hutton is expressed in

Senart, E. *Caste in India; the Facts and the System*, trans. Sir E.D. Ross (London, 1930)

The article 'Caste' in *Encycl. Brit.* is well informed; detailed evidence rather than theory.

A modern study by an Indian writer is:

Ghurye, G.S. *Caste and Race in India* (Bombay, 1969<sup>5</sup>)

### *Slavery*

Many Indians believe that slavery has never existed in India, but the evidence does not bear this out. The evidence for the period covered in this chapter has been collected by:

Chavasse, D.R. *Slavery in Ancient India* (New Delhi, 1960)

## CHAPTER 2 CHRISTIANITY COMES TO INDIA

On all matters dealt with in this chapter, the best general account is undoubtedly:

Brown, L.W. *The Indian Christians of St Thomas: An Account of the Ancient Syrian Church of Malabar* (Cambridge, 1956, 1982<sup>2</sup>)

Much in this chapter depends on the story of the relations between the western world and India. The best general account of all this is:

### *Select Bibliographies*

Wheeler, Mortimer *Rome Beyond the Imperial Frontiers* (London: G. Bell, 1954)  
This highly readable book is based on wide practical knowledge. Unfortunately the bibliography is inadequate to the subject.

On trade between the Roman Empire and the East the pioneer book was:  
Charlesworth, M.P. *Trade-routes and Commerce of the Roman Empire* (Cambridge, 1926)

Mr Charlesworth returned to his old subject in:

'Roman Trade with India; a Resurvey', in *Studies in Roman Economic and Social History in Honour of Allen Chester Johnson* (Princeton, 1951).

A good deal of new light on the whole subject has been thrown by:

Dihle, A. 'Neues zur Thomas Tradition' in *Jahrbuch für Antike und Christentum*, 6 (1963), pp. 53-70.

*Unstrittene Daten; Untersuchungen zum Auftreten der Griechen am Roten Meer* (Cologne, 1965)

*Der Seeweg nach Indien*, Innsbrucker Beiträge zur Kultur-Wissenschaft, 4 (Innsbruck, 1974)

'The Conception of India in Hellenistic and Roman literature', *Proceedings of the Camb. Philol. Society* (1964), pp. 15-23

Miller, J. Innes. *The Spice Trade of the Roman Empire 29BC to AD641* (Oxford, 1969)

Based on long experience of the East, the book includes a minute and valuable study of the actual spices in which the Roman merchants traded.

For more general accounts of contact between India and the west, see:

McCrinkle, J.W. *Ancient India as described in Classical Literature* (Westminster, 1901)

*Ancient India as described by Megasthenes and Arrian* (London, 1877)

*Ancient India as described by Ptolemy* (Bombay, 1885; reprinted, Calcutta, 1927)

A newer work is:

Majumdar, R.C. (ed.) *The Classical Accounts of India* (Calcutta: Mukhopadhyay, 1960)

Rawlinson, H.G. *Intercourse between India and the Western World* (Cambridge, 1916)

This is a highly competent work, as far as knowledge went at the time at which it was written.

Another authoritative work almost contemporary with Charlesworth is:

Warmington, E.H. *The Commerce between the Roman Empire and India* (1928; 2nd ed. London: Curzon Press, 1974, with additions)

The second edition of this valuable work is to be used.



## Chapter 2

### *The 'Periplus'*

For the *Periplus Maris Erythraei*, the only satisfactory text is that of:

Frisk, H. *Le Périples de la Mer Erythrée, suivi d'une étude sur la tradition et la langue* (Göteborg, 1927)

The work may also be conveniently studied in the English translation:

Schoff, W.H. *The Periplus of the Erythraean Sea* (London, 1912; reprint in South Asia Books)

### *Thomas Christians*

The literature on St Thomas and India is immense:

Garbe, R. *Indien und das Christentum* (Tübingen, 1914; Eng. trans. Open Court, 1959)

The author is confident that he has settled the fate of the legend for good and all; not all are in agreement. But he gives a valuable list of the champions of the various views.

An older book, based on extensive research is:

Germann, W. *Die Kirche der Thomas Christen* (Gütersloh, 1877)

For a brief and competent introduction to the subject the reader cannot do better than turn to:

Keay, F.E. *History of the Syrian Church in India* (London, 1938, 1951<sup>2</sup>)

Indispensable, as containing translations of Syriac documents not elsewhere available is:

Mingana, A. *The Early Spread of Christianity in India* (Manchester U.P.; originally in *The Bulletin of the John Rylands Library*, 10, no. 2 (July, 1926)

A large collection of evidence favourable to the sojourn of Thomas in India has been made by:

Medlycott, A.E. *India and the Apostle Thomas, an Inquiry* (London, 1905)

Bishop Medlycott has been followed by many other Roman Catholic writers.

A negative view is taken by:

Thomas, T.K. *South India's St Thomas* (Cannanur, 1952)

Unless some new and convincing evidence is discovered, the debate will continue endlessly and inconclusively.

For Cosmas Indicopleustes, the most recent edition is that by:

Wolska-Conus, Wanda in *Sources Chrétiennes*, nos. 141, 159, 197 (Paris, 1968, 1970, 1973)

This has a useful introduction and notes.

A well-informed and laudatory review of this work by H. Hennepf in *Vig. Chr.*, 35/2 (1981), pp. 195-9, may be noted.

## *Select Bibliographies*

### *Ancient Documents and Copper-plates*

Joseph, T.K. *Malabar Christians and their Ancient Documents* (Trivandrum, 1929)

This contains valuable material, not easily accessible elsewhere.

On the copper-plates, see Appendix 1.

On the Travancore crosses and the decipherment of the inscription, see Appendix 2.

Pothan, S.G. *The Syrian Christians of Kerala* (Bombay, 1963)

This is an intelligent summary of a long story, with excellent reproductions of the copper-plates.

### CHAPTER 3 FROM MEDIEVAL TO MODERN

For the main lines of development, reference must be made to the general histories. Here no more can be done than to note some books on special topics, which will be found useful as guides to further inquiry.

#### *The Greeks in India*

Three books, representing rather different points of view may be mentioned:

Narain, A.K. *The Indo-Greeks* (Oxford, 1957, with very full bibliography)

Narain's point of view is summed up in a single phrase: 'They came, they saw; but India conquered.'

Tarn, W.W. *The Greeks in Bactria and India* (Cambridge, 1938; 1951<sup>2</sup>)

This is the pioneer work, very full and learned; not all Tarn's views have found acceptance.

Woodcock, G. *The Greeks in India* (London: Faber, 1966)

Pleasantly written, and well illustrated. More popular than the two books previously mentioned.

A recent work is:

Sedlar, J.W. *India and the Greek World: A Study in The Transmission of Culture* (Totowa, New Jersey, 1980)

Much information has been gathered, though not in every case critically handled. The work deals only with possible influences of India on the West.

#### *Indian Art*

The many works by A.K. Coomaraswamy are technical, and deal in detail with almost every aspect of the subject. His most general survey is:

### Chapter 3

Coomaraswamy, A.K. *History of Indian and Indonesian Art* (London, 1927)

A pleasant biography is:

Lipsey, R. *Coomaraswamy: his life and work* (Princeton, 1977)

Maury, C. *Folk Origins of Indian Art* (New York and London: Columbia U.P., 1969)

A different approach, but also illuminating. The book is admirably illustrated.

Mitter, P. *Much Maligned Monsters: History of European Reactions to Indian Art* (Oxford, 1977)

Mitter deals faithfully and most interestingly with the subject indicated in the title; a salutary warning to the western or westernised writer.

Rowland, B. *The Art and Architecture of India, Buddhist – Hindu – Jain, The Pelican History of Art* (first published in 1953; reprinted, with comprehensive bibliography by J.C. Harle, 1977)

A considerable section of this admirably illustrated book deals with Indian art outside India.

#### *Philosophy*

On the question of possible Greek influences on Indian philosophy, the student cannot do better than follow through the indices to:

Guthrie, W.K.C. *A History of Greek Philosophy* (so far 5 vols; Cambridge, 1967– )

They will direct him to the sane and learned comments, with full references, of this great scholar.

Reference should also be made to:

Armstrong, A.H. (ed.) *The Cambridge History of Later Greek and Early Medieval Philosophy* (Cambridge, 1967)

The contributions of the editor are of special value.

On the development of Indian philosophy, in addition to the general histories referred to above, two older works will still be found useful:

Monier-Williams, M. *Indian Wisdom* (London, 1875, reprinted, Varanasi, 1963)

This covers a wide field; philosophy as such is dealt with in chapters 3–7.

Müller, F. Max *The Six Systems of Indian Philosophy* (Oxford, 1899; reprinted, Varanasi, 1960)

This is the last great work of this notable pioneer.

#### *Literature*

Keith, A. Berriedale *A History of Sanskrit Literature* (Oxford, 1928)

This is still the outstanding survey; to be supplemented by many specialist studies by Indian writers.

## *Select Bibliographies*

On Drama, the pioneer work was:

Lévi, Sylvain *Le théâtre indien* (Paris: Bouillon, 1890)

Referring to the theory of Greek influence on Indian drama, Lévi remarks 'nous avons crû devoir la repousser avec énergie' (p. 3).

The work was taken up and amplified in

Keith, A. Berriedale *The Sanskrit Drama in its Origin, Development, Theory and Practice* (Oxford, 1924, 1959<sup>2</sup>)

The question of possible Greek influences is discussed in chapter 12, pp. 276ff.

A useful contribution has been made by:

Wells, H.W. *Six Sanskrit Plays in English translation* (London: Asia Publ. House, 1964)

Less satisfactory is his book:

*The Classical Drama of India* (London: Asia Publ. House, 1963)

### *Śiva and Viṣṇu*

Perhaps the most striking change in the emphasis of Indian religion in the post-Christian centuries is the immense development of Śaivism and Vaiṣṇavism. A learned introduction to this theme is given by:

Gonda, J. *Viṣṇuism and Śaivism: A Comparison* (London: Athlone Press, 1970; also South Asia Books, 1976)

(A rather critical review of this work by N. Smart in *BSOAS*, 34 (1971), p. 614, may be noted.)

### *The Hindu Renaissance*

On the disappearance of Buddhism from India, the weakening of Jainism, and the recovery of Hinduism, no entirely satisfactory work as yet exists. One aspect of the subject is dealt with in:

Mitra, R.C. *The Decline of Buddhism in India* (Visva-Bharat, 1954)

Chapter 9, pp. 103–24, deals with Buddhism in South India.

References will also be found in:

Nilakantha Sastri *The Paṇḍyan Kingdom: from the Earliest Times to the Sixteenth Century* (London: Luzac, 1929)

But on this the comment of Professor J. Charpentier needs to be noted: that he 'dwells far too cursorily upon the religious intolerance and the spirit of persecution that seems often to have prevailed in the southern realms. That there was a grim persecution of the Jains within the Paṇḍyan kingdom during the seventh century AD can scarcely be doubted' (In *BSOAS*, 2 (1930–2), p. 217).

## Chapter 3

### *Hindu Bhakti*

On Hindu *bhakti*, both northern and southern, there is now an extensive literature.

On the philosophical side, Rāmānuja stands out above all others; and here a work to be specially commended is:

Carman, J.B. *The Theology of Rāmānuja, an Essay in Inter-Religious Understanding* (Yale U.P., 1974). The bibliography is ample and reliable.

Written from a Christian standpoint, this is a serious attempt to understand the thought and experience of a great Indian thinker.

An earlier attempt to make the West aware of Rāmānuja is:

Otto, R. *Die Gnadenreligion Indiens und das Christentum* (Gotha: Klotz, 1930; Eng. trans. *India's Religion of Grace and Christianity Compared and Contrasted* (London: SCM Press, 1930))

Dhavamony SJ, M. 'Ways of Salvation in Hinduism', *Studia Missionalia*, 30 (1981), pp. 307-49. 'Bibliography on *bhakti* in Hinduism', pp. 287-306. This is a comprehensive survey of *bhakti* in Hinduism, with an extensive bibliography.

Yocum, G.E. 'Personal transformation through *Bhakti*', *Studia Missionalia*, 30 (1981), pp. 351-75, with special reference to Manickavaçakar.

There are insights of value in:

Zaehner, R.C. *Hindu and Muslim Mysticism* (Oxford, 1960)

### *Śaiva-Siddhānta*

A quite outstanding piece of research by an Indian Christian scholar is:

Dhavamony SJ, M. *Love of God according to Śaiva-Siddhānta; A Study in the Mysticism and Theology of Śaivism* (Oxford, 1971)

This deals with the philosophical aspects. A full list of the *Śaiva-Siddhānta* philosophical classics, with chronology, is included.

A much shorter work, also by a Christian scholar, is:

Paranjoti, V. *Śaiva Siddhānta in the Meykaṇḍa Śāstra* (London: Luzac, 1938; 1954<sup>2</sup>)

The first comprehensive work on Śaiva Siddhānta was:

Schomerus, H.W. *Der Śaiva-Siddhānta; eine Mystik Indiens, nach den tamilischen Quellen bearbeitet und dargestellt* (Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1912)

This is a praiseworthy effort by a German missionary.

We still await an equally comprehensive work on Tamil *bhakti* as expressed in

### *Select Bibliographies*

poetry. Three works will give the English reader a preliminary initiation into this world:

Hooper, J.S.M. *Hymns of the Ālvārs* [the Vaiṣṇavite Singers] (Mysore, 1929)  
Kingsbury, F. and Phillips, G.E. *Hymns of the Tamil Śaivite Saints* (Mysore, 1921)

(In spite of his English name, Kingsbury was a pure Tamil.)

Pope, G.U. *The Tiruvāṇṇam, or Sacred Utterances of the Tamil Poet, Saint and Sage Mānikkavāṇṇar* (Oxford, 1900)

This has extremely valuable notes and translations of other Śaivite works.

#### *Islam in India*

For an introduction to what Islam in India is, and how Muslims experience it, the essential book is:

Herklots, G.A. *Islam in India, or the Qānūn-i-Islām, from the Urdu of Ja'far Sharif, a native of the Deccan*, first published in 1832, and newly edited with additions by W. Crooke (Oxford, 1921; reprinted London: Curzon Press, 1972)

The author was a South Indian Sunnī; experts say that his evidence must be supplemented by:

Hassan Ali, Mrs Meer *Observations on the Mussulmans of India* (1832; re-published, Oxford, 1916)

and

Tassy, Garcin de *Mémoires sur les particularités de la religion Mussulmane dans l'Inde* (Paris, 1831)

Important sidelights are given in

Lal, K.S. *Growth of Muslim Population in medieval India, AD 1000-1800* (Delhi, 1973)

Lal estimates the population of India in 1650 as 150 million, of whom about ten per cent may have been Muslims.

Mujeeb, M. *The Indian Muslims* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1967)

This is a comprehensive study, the aim of which is 'to portray the life of the Indian Muslims in all its aspects, beginning with the advent of the Muslims in India' (p. 9). There is a full bibliography, but arranged alphabetically and not according to subjects.

Titus, M.T. *Indian Islam* (Oxford, 1930)

Titus brings together a great deal of information not easily accessible elsewhere. He shows in detail how Indian Islam has been influenced by the environment, in many cases through the retention by converts of customary observances.

Schimmel, Annemarie *Islam in the Indian Sub-continent* (Brill-Leiden, 1980)

This is now authoritative on every aspect of the subject.

## Chapter 4

### *Indian Reformers*

Hinduism may be said to have been in a state of continuous reformation, especially since the rise of Islam in India. Most of the reformers may be pursued through the generally admirable articles in:

Hastings *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*

In many cases these reformers have left behind communities, which, though small, form an important part of the religious landscape of India. One or two are important enough to deserve special mention in a bibliography.

Kabīr is an attractive figure. Two modern books have been devoted to him:

Keay, F.E. *Kabīr and his Followers* (Calcutta, 1932)

Westcott, G.H. *Kabīr and the Kabīr Panth* (Cawnpore, 1907; Calcutta, 1953<sup>2</sup>)

For Gurū Nānak and the Sikhs, the student desirous of detailed information must turn to the magisterial work:

Macauliffe, M.A. *The Sikh Religion: Its Gurus, Sacred Writings and Authors* (6 vols, Oxford, 1909ff)

Those content with a less extensive knowledge can perhaps not do better than start with the series of works:

McLeod, W.H. *Gurū Nānak and the Sikh Religion* (Oxford, 1968)

*The Sikhs of the Punjab* (Auckland, 1968, 1970<sup>2</sup>)

*The Way of the Sikh* (Amersham, 1975)

A recent study is:

Cole, W.O. and Piara Singh Sambhi *The Sikhs: their Religious Beliefs and Practices* (London: Routledge, 1978)

## CHAPTER 4 CHRISTIANS IN THE INDIAN MIDDLE AGE

The scanty information available to us about Christians in India in the seven centuries between AD 800 and 1500 has been collected and made available to us in three indispensable works:

1. Yule, Sir Henry (ed.) *The Book of Ser Marco Polo concerning the kingdoms and marvels of the East, newly translated and edited with notes* (2 vols, London, 1871; 2nd ed. London and Edinburgh, 1903; 3rd ed., rev. H. Cordier, London: John Murray, 1921)

A much better text than that available to Sir Henry Yule has been produced by: Benedetto, L.F. *Il Milione, prima edizione integrale a cura di L.F. Benedetto* (Florence, 1928)

Unless new and remarkable discoveries are made, this may be taken as the definitive edition.

A translation made from this text is also available:

### *Select Bibliographies*

Ricci, A. *The Travels of Marco Polo, trans. from the text of L.F. Benedetto* (London: Broadway Travellers, 1931)

Penzer, N.M. *The Most Noble and Famous Travels of Marco Polo, together with the Travels of Nicolo de Conti, ed. from the Elizabethan trans. of J. Frampton; with introduction, notes and appendices.* (London: A. and C. Black, 1937<sup>2</sup>)

This is a most agreeable translation; and the introduction with excellent maps is valuable.

2. Yule, Sir Henry *Cathay and the Way Thither: being a collection of medieval notices of China*, translated and edited by Sir Henry Yule CB (2 vols, London, 1866); 3rd ed. rev. H. Cordier (4 vols, London: John Murray, 1913ff)
3. Major, R.H. (ed.) *India in the Fifteenth Century* (London: Hakluyt Society, 1857)

Sir Henry Yule rendered a further service to knowledge by his edition and translation of:

Fr Jordanus OP *Mirabilia Descripta* (London: Hakluyt Society, 1863)

It is possible, but not very likely, that further information still lies hidden in the recesses of western libraries. It is to be noted that none of our information comes from Indian sources. Indian writers during these centuries do not seem to have been interested in the existence of Christians among them.

This may be the point at which to mention:

Gibb, Sir H.A.R. *Ibn Baṭṭūṭah (Muḥammad b. 'Abd Allah): travels in Asia and Africa, 1325-1354*, The Broadway Travellers (London: Routledge and Sons Ltd, 1929)

This is an admirable selection, with a useful survey of Islam in the fourteenth century.

(Only Volume I of the complete translation has so far appeared:

*The Travels of Ibn Baṭṭūṭa AD 1325-1354*, vol. I (Cambridge, 1958).)

#### CHAPTER 5 EUROPE AND ASIA; CONTACT AND CONFLICT

From 1498 onwards, our sources are only too voluminous; and as, in the Portuguese period, church and state can hardly be separated, the secular historians are among our most important sources.

For the early period, five writers are reckoned as being of great importance: John de Barros, D. de Couto, F.L. de Castanheda, John Bocarro and Gaspar Correa.

1. Barros, John de
2. Couto, D. de



## Chapter 5

These were, in succession, responsible for the great series of *Decadas*, published in twenty-four volumes between 1778 and 1788. The first three are by Barros, who was never in India; the remainder by Couto, who spent most of his life in India and died in 1616. *Decada 11* has never been found, and of 12 only the first five books are known to exist.

3. Castanheda, F.L. de *Historia do Descobrimento e Conquista da India*, ed. P. de Azevedo (Coimbra, Imprensa da Universidade, 1924<sup>3</sup>)

Castanheda went to India in 1528, and stayed there for ten years. Books I to VI of his work were published in 1552-4; books VII and VIII in 1561, after his death. Part of book IX (chaps 1-31) was recently discovered and edited by Fr J. Wessels SJ (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1929, with facsimile.) All that Castanheda writes is of the greatest value, as being the work of a careful and high-minded observer.

4. Bocarro, John *Decada XIII*, written in 1635 (2 vols, Lisbon, 1872)

Bocarro shows greater interest than the others in the Asian powers, and this gives to his work a more modern feel.

5. Correa, Gaspar *Lendas da India* (4 vols, Lisbon, 1858-64, reprinted Nendeln/Leichtenstein, 1976)

Correa went to India in 1512 and worked there for more than fifty years.

Correa states that 'I undertook the work with pleasure, for the beginning of things in India was so golden that there was no hint of the iron beneath.' He is described as being 'less of the chronicler and more of the historian' than the others.

An invaluable article is:

Harrison, J.B. 'Five Portuguese Historians' in Philips, C.H., *Historians of India, Pakistan and Ceylon* (London, 1967<sup>3</sup>), pp. 155-69.

Harrison sums up his results: 'Within their limits they were extraordinarily conscientious . . . careful to check what they were told . . . and as a result, when modern scholars test their work, they emerge as both great and reliable historians.' 'They are indeed five magnificent writers' (p. 155).

There is a separate study of Correa:

Bell, A.F.G. *Gaspar Correa* (Oxford, 1924)

For most English readers an adequate account of the process of discovery and the re-establishment of relations between Europe and Asia is provided by two admirable books:

Boxer, C.R. *The Portuguese Seaborne Empire 1415-1825* (London: Hutchinsons, 1969)

Parry, J.H. *The Age of Reconnaissance* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1963)

Both have good bibliographies.

To this may be added:

Boxer, C.R. *Race Relations in the Portuguese Colonial Empire 1415-1825* (Oxford, 1963)

This is a small work which gives a great deal of valuable information in concise form.

## Select Bibliographies

The first classic account of all these voyages is:

Ramusio, Gian Battista (ed.) *Delle Navigazioni e Viaggi nel qual si contiene la descrizione dell'Africa, e del Paese del Prete Ioanni, con varii Viaggi, del Mar Rosso à Calicut, et in fin all'Isole Molucche, dove nascono le Spezerie, e la Navigazione attorno il Mondo* (vol. I, Venice, 1550; vol. II, Venice, 1559; vol. III, Venice, 1556)

See note in Parry, *The Age of Reconnaissance*, p. 342: 'Ramusio, like Hakluyt, was a careful and discriminating editor and translator. His collection is the most important single source of our knowledge of the Reconnaissance.'

For Prince Henry the Navigator, the classic work in English is:

Major, R.H. *The Life of Prince Henry of Portugal surnamed the Navigator; and its results; comprising the Discovery, within one Century, of Half the World* (London: A. Asher and Co., 1868)

This may be usefully supplemented by:

Ure, J.B. *Prince Henry the Navigator* (London: Constable, 1977)

This is an independent and up to date account, which attempts to see the Prince against the background of the problems of his age.

For a general description of Portuguese power in India, two books in English will suffice:

Danvers, F.C. *The Portuguese in India: being a History of the Rise and Decline of their Eastern Empire* (2 vols, London: W.H. Allen, 1894; reprint: Octagon, 1966)

Whiteway, R.S. *The Rise of Portuguese Power in India 1497-1550* (London: Constable, 1899)

This is described by C.R. Boxer as 'still the best introduction to the subject', with a useful and well annotated bibliography.

Indispensable for detailed study of the Portuguese period in India are the successive issues of:

Mare Luso-Indicum: L'Océan Indien, les Pays Rivérains, et les Relations Internationales, XVI<sup>e</sup>-XVIII<sup>e</sup> Siecles (1, 1971; 2, 1972; 3, 1976; 4, 1980)

A monumental study of the relations between Asia and Europe in this period, from a rather unusual point of view, is:

Lach, D. *Asia in the Making of Europe*, vol. 1, 'The Century of Discovery' (Chicago, 1965)

An extract from this larger work is:

*India in the Eyes of Europe: The Sixteenth Century* (Chicago and London: Phoenix Books, 1968)

Lach has even disinterred a letter written from Goa in 1596 by a Polish nobleman, Christopher Pawlowski.

## Chapter 5

### *Mughuls*

For the Mughul period in Indian history, apart from the general histories, the best introduction is:

Edwardes, S.M., and Garrett, H.L.O. *Mughal Rule in India* (London, 1930)

Bābur is naturally best studied in his own writing:

*The Bābur-nāma in English (Memoirs of Bābur)* (more correctly *Tūzuk-i-Bāburī*), trans. from the original Turki text by Annette Susannah Beveridge (2 vols. London: Luzac and Co., 1921-2), with copious indices.

This has completely replaced the earlier translation by W. Erskine (from the Persian, 1826).

For the reigns of Bābur and Hūmayūn, the student is well-advised still to turn to: Erskine, W. *A History of India under Bāber and Humāyun* (2 vols, London: Longmans, 1854)

One of the first serious attempts at Indian history writing by a European resident in India, this work has naturally in some respects been superseded by later writings; but was found worthy to be reprinted in Karachi (OUP, 2 vols) in 1974 with an introduction by P. Hardy.

The materials on Akbar are embarrassing in their multiplicity.

The full annotated bibliography in *History and Culture*, 8, pp. 459-86, is remarkably complete up to the date of publication.

The two great contemporary works are easily accessible in English translation: Abu'l Fazl Allāmī *Āin-i-Akbarī*, vol. I, trans. H. Blochmann, with most valuable notes (Calcutta, 1873; rev. D.C. Phillpott, 1927); vols II and III, trans. H.S. Jarrett (Calcutta, 1891, 1894; vol. III rev. Sir J. Sarkar, 1948)

*Akbar-nāma*, trans. H. Beveridge (3 vols, Calcutta, 1897-1921)

Though defaced by tedious rhetoric and endless flattery, the writings of Abu'l Fazl are the basis of all later study of Akbar.

Among modern biographies of Akbar, pride of place must be given to

Smith, V.A. *Akbar the Great Mogul 1542-1605* (Oxford, 1917)

Smith was patient and fair-minded, and set himself conscientiously to depict the greatness of Akbar as a ruler.

Frederick Augustus, Count von Noer *Kaiser Akbar* (1880-5); Eng. trans. Mrs Beveridge (Calcutta, 1890); reprinted (2 vols, Patna, 1973) as *The Emperor Akbar; a contribution towards the history of India in the 16th century*

The work is marred by the writer's fulsome admiration for his subject; but it is valuable as making use of the Jesuit sources which had been neglected by others.

Ashirbadi Lal Srivastava *Akbar the Great* (3 vols, Agra, 1962-73)

This is lengthy and pretentious, and adds less than might have been hoped to

### Select Bibliographies

knowledge of the subject. But, as the most extensive work produced on Akbar by a modern Indian writer, it deserves attention.

Moreland, W.H. *India at the death of Akbar* (London, 1920)

This is based on wide knowledge of the sources. Moreland is generally reliable; but for criticisms of his methods see the essay by J.B. Harrison, 'Notes on W.H. Moreland as Historian' in:

Philips, C.H. (ed.) *Historians of India, Pakistan and Ceylon* (1967<sup>3</sup>), pp. 310-18. (See p. 513)

Akbar's religious views and projects are dealt with in Chapter 8.

#### CHAPTER 6 BEGINNINGS OF MISSION

There is a large literature on the Portuguese *padroado* and the Spanish *patronato*.

A full and authoritative study, from the Portuguese point of view, is:

da Silva Rêgo, A. *O Padroado Português do Oriente: Esboço Histórico* (Lisbon: Agência Geral das Colónias, 1940)

This is based in part on archival material, and has a full bibliography.

A more recent, and important, study is:

de Witte, C.M. *Les Bulles Pontificales et l'expansion portugaise au XVe siècle* (Louvain, 1958)

See *Revue d'Histoire Ecclésiastique* (1953, 1954, 1956 and 1958).

More accessible to English readers is:

Hull SJ, E. *Bombay Mission History, with a special study of the Padroado Question* (2 vols, Bombay, 1927, 1930)

Valuable bibliographical information is given in:

Aubenas, R., and Richard R. 'L'Eglise et la Renaissance 1440-1517', pp. 122-6, vol. xv of Fliche and Martin, *Histoire de l'Eglise* (Paris: Bloud and Gay, 1951)

All the essential official documents are collected in:

Jordão, L.M., and Manso, V. de Paiva *Bullarium Patronatus Portugalliae Regum in Ecclesiis Africae, Asiae atque Oceaniae, Bullas, Brevia, Epistolas, Decreta Actaque Sanctae Sedis ab Alexandro III ad hoc usque tempus amplectens* (4 vols, Lisbon, 1868-73)

All students of the sixteenth century are deeply indebted to the work of:

da Silva Rêgo, A. *Documentação para a Historia das Missões do Padroado Português do Oriente, Índia* (12 vols, Lisbon, 1948-58)

(For some criticisms, see J. Wicki SJ, in *AHSI*, 21, pp. 624-6). The same writer has added to our indebtedness by:

## Chapter 6

*Historia das Missões do Padroado Português do Oriente, India*, vol. 1, '1500-42' (Lisbon, 1949)

Unfortunately vol. II seems not to have appeared. The material, based on an immense acquaintance with all the sources, is arranged geographically, under Goa, Cochin etc. But full references are given; and the judgements of the writer seem to be generally sound.

Jann, A. *Die katholischen Missionen in Indien, China and Japan. Ihre Organization und das portugiesische Patronat vom 15 bis ins 18 Jahrhundert* (Paderborn, 1915)  
This is well indexed, and gives much information on matters of ecclesiastical organisation.

d'Costa SJ, A. *The Christianisation of the Goa Islands 1510-1567* (Bombay, 1965)  
This is based on careful research into original documents. Here and there Fr d'Costa's approach is a little apologetic; he tends to soften the asperities of Portuguese rule. For a critical review, see C.R. Boxer in *BSOAS* (1966), pp. 399-401.

d'Sa, M. *History of the Catholic Church in India* (2 vols, Bombay, 1910, 1922)  
This contains much information, but in episodic rather than systematised form.

Nazareth, C.C. de *Mitras Lusitanas no Oriente, Catalogo dos Prelados da Egreja Metropolitana e Primacial da Goa e das Dioceses Suffraganeas* (Lisbon, 1894<sup>2</sup>); vol. II 'Mitras Lusitanas no Oriente: Catalogo dos Superiores das Missões do Norte e do Sul da India' (Nova Goa, 1924)

This is an immense collection of material, indispensable for detailed study, and with ample bibliographical notes; but not very conveniently arranged.

For the Franciscans, the great contemporary authority is:

Gonzaga, Francesco *De Origine Seraphicae Religionis Franciscanae* (Rome, 1587)  
Gonzaga (1546-1620) had been elected minister general of the Franciscans at the early age of thirty-three and had therefore had every opportunity to study original documents. He is a little less than impartial in his estimate of Franciscan achievements (*Encicl. Cattol.*, VI, col. 923).

The modern historian of the Franciscan Missions is:

Lemmens, L. *Geschichte der Franziskanermissionen* (Münster i. Westf., 1929)  
The book deals with so wide a field that for India it is little more than an outline, though carefully and to some extent critically carried out.

Fr A. Meersman OFM has for many years been studying the history of the Franciscans in India, and the series of books that he has produced is of the highest value. That which is most relevant to this chapter is:

Meersman, A. *The Ancient Franciscan Provinces in India 1500-1835* (Bangalore, 1971)

## *Select Bibliographies*

### CHAPTER 7 THE JESUITS AND THE INDIAN CHURCH

#### *Francis Xavier*

For the greater part of this chapter the primary sources are the Letters of Francis Xavier himself. These are now available in the superb work:

Schurhammer SJ, G., and Wicki SJ, J. *Epistolae S. Francisci Xavierii Aliaque eius Scripta* (2 vols, Rome, 1944, 1945)

This has an introduction and admirable notes.

An English translation, based on this revised text, to replace the existing translation made by Fr H. Coleridge SJ (1872) from the Latin, is greatly to be desired.

With these is to be taken the older series of:

*Monumenta Xaveriana*, Mon. Hist. Soc. Jesu (2 vols, Madrid, 1899–1912)

This includes some early lives of Xavier, and the proceedings leading to his canonisation.

The oldest life of Xavier has been published as:

Wicki, J. 'Das neu entdeckte Xaveriusleben des P. Francisco Peres SJ', *AHSJ*, 34 (1965), pp. 36–78.

These sources can now be supplemented by the great collection of other original documents:

Wicki SJ, J. *Documenta Indica* (Rome, 1948– )

So far fourteen volumes have appeared, all manifesting the impeccable skill and erudition of the editor. Some other Jesuit documents of this period may still be discovered, but they are likely to be few.

All other works on Xavier have now been cast into the shade by:

Schurhammer, G. *Franz Xaver: sein Leben und seine Zeit* (4 vols, Freiburg i. B.: Herder, 1955ff)

Schurhammer wanders far and wide, but gives an extraordinarily vivid and detailed picture of the world in which Xavier lived, and is notably accurate. The first three volumes of this work have now been translated into English:

Costelloe SJ, M.J. *Francis Xavier: his life and his times*, Jesuit Hist. Inst. (Rome: vol. I, 1973; vol. II, 1977; vol. III, 1980. The final volume will follow in due course)

Many subsidiary works of Fr G. Schurhammer have been collected in his

*Gesammelte Studient* (4 vols, Lisbon, 1963ff)

The volumes entitled: 'Orientalia' (ed. L. Szilas, 1963); and 'Xaveriana' (ed. L. Szilas, 1964) are of special significance for this chapter.

A number of lives of Xavier had already been written in the sixteenth century. A good account of them is:

## Chapter 7

Schurhammer, G. 'Historical Research into the Life of Francis Xavier in the Sixteenth Century', in 'Orientalia', pp. 90-114 (in German, pp. 57-89)

The Life by Teixeira is included in *Mon. Xav.*, vol. II, pp. 815-918.

That by Valignano has been edited by J. Wicki SJ in:  
*Historia del principio y progreso de la Compañia de Jesús en las Indias Orientales 1542-64*, Bibl. Inst. Hist. S.I., II (Rome, 1944)

English readers, requiring a shorter account of the saint, may be satisfied with:  
Brodrick SJ, J. *St Francis Xavier (1506-1552)* (London: Burns and Oates, 1952)  
This is interestingly written, but is at times more picturesque than accurate.

Stewart, E.A. *Francis Xavier* (London: Headley Bros, 1917)  
This sympathetic Life by a non-Roman-Catholic writer still serves as an excellent introduction.

An interesting study of an aspect of Xavier's work which is often overlooked is:  
Don Peter, W.L.A. *Xavier as Educator* (4 Raj Niwas Marg, Delhi, 1974)

An important article on Xavier's attitude to the creation of an Indian priesthood is:  
Wicki, J. 'Franz Xaver's Stellung zur Herausbildung des einheimischen Klerus im Orient' (orig. in *Studia Missionalia*, 5 (1950), pp. 93-113, reprinted in *Missionskirche im Orient: Ausgewählte Beiträge über Portugiesisch-Asien* (Supplement XXIV to *NZM*, 1976)

Aurati, Agostino *Nicolai Lancilotto; un gesuita urbinato del secolo XVI in India* (Urbino, 1974)

This study gives little information on the work of Lancilotto in India, but includes Italian translations of two accounts of Japan written by Lancilotto apparently on the basis of information supplied to him by Anjiro, the first Japanese convert, who later accompanied Xavier on his journey to Japan.

### *Jesuits - Histories etc.*

For the general background and development of the Society of Jesus, most English readers will find sufficient material in two books:

Brodrick SJ, J. *The Origin of the Jesuits* (London, 1940)  
*The Progress of the Jesuits 1556-79* (London, 1946)

Three early Jesuit histories which can now be studied in modern editions are:  
Gonçalves SJ, Sebastian *Primeira Parte da Historia dos religiosos da Companhia de Jesús, e do que fizeram con a divina graça na conversão dos infieis a nossa sancta fee catholica nos regnos e provincias de India Oriental*, ed. J. Wicki SJ (vols I-III, Lisbon, 1957-62)

Guerreiro SJ, F. *Relação Annual dos Coisas que fizeram os Padres da Companhia de*

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*Jesús nas suas Missões* (new ed., Lisbon, 1930-42)

Sousa, F. de *Oriente Conquistado a Jesú Christo pelos Padres da Companhia de Jesús da Provincia de Goa*, vols I and II (Lisbon, 1710; new ed. Bombay, 1881-6)

An early life of Xavier now available in a new edition is:

Lucena SJ, J. de *Historia da Vida do Padre Francisco de Xavier e do que fizeram os mais Religiosos da Companhia de Jesú* (original ed., Lisbon, 1600; new ed. 2 vols, Lisbon, 1952; further revised, Lisbon: União Grafica, 1959, 1960)

In the revised edition, an admirable piece of printing, the orthography and punctuation have been modernised, a great help to the reader.

#### CHAPTER 8 AKBAR AND THE JESUITS

For the religious views of Akbar, see, in addition to the works listed under Chapter 5:

Krishnamurti, R. *Akbar, the Religious Aspect* (Baroda, 1961)

Mehta, N.C. *The Religious Policy of Akbar* (Bombay, 1946)

This is a doctorate thesis, with quotations from original sources.

Sharma, Sri Ram *Religious Policy of the Mughal Emperors* (Calcutta, 1940)

An able study, based on original sources, it deals with more than the reign of Akbar.

Wellesz, E. *Akbar's Religious Thought reflected in Mogul Painting* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1952)

An excellent summary of Akbar's religious history.

For the Jesuit mission, we are fortunate in now having available the original letters of the time, in:

da Silva Rêgo *Documentação*, vol. XII

and

Wicki, SJ, J. *Documenta Indica*, II and 12

These do not, as a matter of fact, add very much to what was already known; but it is satisfactory to be able to read contemporary letters and to know what was thought about the mission at the time.

Bartoli, D. *Missione al Gran Mogor del P. Ridolfo Aquaviva della Compagnia de Gesù* (Rome, 1663; reprint in 1714; new ed. at Piacenza in 1819; reprinted, Milan 1945.)

In a prolix age Bartoli holds the record for prolixity; but he had access to many original sources and used them well.

Guerreiro, F. *Relaçam annual das cousas que fizeram os Padres etc* (Evora and Lisbon, 1603-11)



## Chapter 8

Parts of vols I, II and III are relevant to the period of the first mission to the Great Mogul. (A new ed. of the *Relaçam* appeared from the university of Coimbra, 1930-42.)

du Jarric SJ, P. *Histoire des choses plus mémorables advenues tant ez Indes Orientales, que autres païs de la decouverte des Portugais, en l'establissement et progrez de la foy Chrestienne et Catholique; et principalement de ce que les Religieux de la comp. de Jésus y ont fait et enduré pour la mesme fin; depuis qu'ils y sont entrez jusques à l'an 1600* (3 vols, Bordeaux, 1608, 1610, 1614). Latin trans. by M. Martinez, *Thesaurus Rerum Indicarum* (Cologne, 1615)

Du Jarric was not an original historian, but a faithful and on the whole reliable compiler. His book is not readily accessible; it is much to be desired that it should be reprinted.

Of the other ancient sources by far the most important are the two writings:

Monserrate, Fr A. *Relaçam do Equebar*, ed. and trans. Fr H. Hosten SJ, under the title 'Father A. Monserrate's account of Akbar' in *JASB* NS 8 (1912), pp. 185-228.

*Mongolicae Legationis Commentarius*, MASH, 3, 9 (1914), pp. 518-704, ed. Fr H. Hosten, with valuable introduction and notes; Eng. trans. by J.S. Hoyland and S.N. Banerjee, *The Commentarius of Fr Monserrate* (Bombay, 1922)

The translation is also a valuable work; but for some criticism, and also on the history of the *Commentarius*, see further, Appendix 16.

The other contemporary writers who enter into the picture are:

de Guzman, L. *Historia de las Misiones que han hecho los religiosos de la Compañia de Jesús* (reprint, Bilbao 1891)

(pp. 140-56 deal with the mission to the Great Mogul)

and

Hay SJ, J. *De Rebus Iaponicis, Indicis et Peruanis epistolae recentiores* (Antwerp, 1605)

Hay is a good and careful editor; some information given by him is not found elsewhere.

Peruschi, J.B. *Informatione del Regno e Stato del gran Rè di Mogor . . .* (Rome, 1597)

Also the *Historica Relatio de . . . Regis Mogor . . . vita, moribus, et summa in Christianam religionem propensione* (from his letters of 1582, 1591 and 1595) (Rome, 1598)

Among modern writers on this theme, pride of place must be yielded to:

Maclagan, Sir Edward 'Jesuit Missions to the Emperor Akbar, from notes recorded by the late General R. Maclagan RE' in *JASB*, 65 (1896), pp. 38-113.

This excellent piece of editing, which was his first work, brought to light a number

### *Select Bibliographies*

of letters previously unknown, and gave promise of even better things to come. Many years later Maclagan followed this up with:

*The Jesuits and the Great Mogul* (London: Burns and Oates, 1932)

Time has only confirmed first judgements as to the excellence of Maclagan's work. It is complete, as far as the sources available up to 1930 are concerned. It is careful and accurate, sympathetic in attitude and prudent in judgement. A deservedly favourable review by C.C. Davies is in *BSOS*, 7 (1933-5), pp. 229-31.

For the Third Mission, the pioneer investigator has been Hosten SJ, Fr H. A list of his contributions to knowledge has been given by Maclagan, *Jesuits*, Appendix II, pp. 391-5: 'The Chief Contributions of Fr H. Hosten SJ to the History of the Jesuits at the Mogul Court'.

Also for the Third Mission, a place of exceptional honour must be accorded to: Camps OFM, A. *Jerome Xavier SJ and the Muslims of the Mogul Empire* (Schöneck-Beckenried, 1957)

For 'Sources and Literature' see pp. xvi and xvii.

Hernandez SJ, Angel Santos *Jeronimo Javier SJ; Apostol del Gran Mogol y Arzobispo electo de Cranganor en la India, 1549-1617* (Pamplona, 1958)

Written before, but published after, the work of A. Camps, it is fuller on the biographical side, but less satisfactory as a theological study.

Unless entirely new sources are discovered, it is possible to say that we now have a complete account of the work and witness of a great missionary, the second Xavier.

Payne, C.H. *Akbar and the Jesuits: an Account of the Jesuit Missions to the Court of Akbar by Father Pierre du Jarric SJ* (London: Routledge, 1926)

Payne has rendered notable service by making available in English the best of du Jarric, with valuable introduction and notes. For English readers this ranks with the work of Maclagan as a source of information.

Correia-Afonso, J. (ed.) *Letters from the Mughal Court* (Bombay: Heras Institute of Indian History and Culture, 1982)

This is a useful collection of actual letters of the period.

#### CHAPTER 9 ROME AND THE THOMAS CHRISTIANS

By far the best general guide is, as before:

Brown, L.W. *The Indian Christians of St Thomas: An Account of the Ancient Syrian Church of Malabar* (Cambridge, 1956, 1982<sup>2</sup>)

The Portuguese sources are in the main those mentioned in the bibliographies to chapters 5, 6, 7 and 8.

For this chapter special note must be taken of:

## Chapter 9

Gouvea, A. *Jornada do Arcebispo da Goa Dom Frey Aleixo de Menezes Primas da India Oriental religioso da Orden de S. Agostinho* (Coimbra, 1606); French translation J.B. Glen, *Histoire orientale des grans progrès de l'église catholique en la réduction des chrestiens de S. Thomas, par le ryme Don Alexis de Menezes, Archevêque de Goa, composée en langue portugaise par A. Gouvea et tournée en français par J.B. Glen* (Antwerp, 1609)

(Glen is generally accurate, but has to be checked against the original of Gouvea.) This work is the source of all subsequent accounts of the Synod of Diamper and all that led up to it.

In English:

Geddes, M. *The History of the Church of Malabar, from the time of its being first discovered by the Portugeuzes in the year 1501 . . . Together with the Synod of Diamper, celebrated in 1599, done out of Portuguese into English. With some remarks upon the faith and doctrines of the Christians of St Thomas in the Indies* (London, 1694)

Geddes (1650–1713) was in Lisbon from 1678 to 1688. There is an account of him in *DNB*, vol. VII (1900), pp. 982–3.

The chancellor of Salisbury Cathedral rendered a great service by making available much of the account of Gouvea and by giving a complete rendering of the Acts of the Synod of Diamper. See Appendix 19.

A further source is:

Pimenta, N. and Aquaviva, Cl. *Nova Relatio Historica de rebus in India Orientali a patribus Soc. J. anno 1598 et 99 gestis* (Mainz, 1601)

A book to which reference has constantly to be made, with the usual complaints about the author's failure to give references for his quotations, is:

Ferroli SJ, D. *The Jesuits in Malabar*, vol. 1 (Bangalore, 1939)

Something like a break-through was achieved by the publication of:

Mundadan OMI, A.M. *The Arrival of the Portuguese in India and The Thomas Christians under Mar Jacob 1498–1522* (Bangalore 29: Dharmaran College, 1967)

Like all other students of the period, Fr Mundadan notes that 'it is deplorable that we have very little material from the Indian side'. But, as being himself a Thomas Christian of the Roman Catholic obedience, he is well placed to understand the history from within, and has tried with the help of the Portuguese records to enter into the minds of Christians of that period. He has had access to many original documents preserved in archives in Rome, London and Lisbon.

With this may be read:

Gulbenkian, R. 'Jacome Abuna, an Armenian bishop in Malabar (1503–1550)', *Arquivo do Centro Cultural Português*, 4, pp. 149–76.

Works not referred to elsewhere in this bibliography are:

### Select Bibliographies

- Dionysio SJ, F. *Informação de Christiandade de São Thomé que estaen no Malavar, Reino do India Oriental* (1578) in *SR Documentação*, vol. XII, pp. 394-403
- Placid CD, T.O. 'Portuguese Religious Conquests in Malabar under the diocese of Cochin during the sixteenth century, the report for 1597', *NZM*, 13 (1957), pp. 257-306.
- Soledade, F. *Historia Seraphica da Orden dos Frailes Menores de S. Francisco na Provincia de Portugal* (Lisbon, 1705)

We still await a book to do for the period 1552-97 what Fr Mundadan has done for 1498-1552.

As noted in the text, the controversy as to the validity of the Synod of Diamper has been carried on mainly by:

- Antão, G. Magno de *De Synodi Diamperitani Natura et Decretis* (Goa, 1952)
- Thaliath, TOCD, J. *The Synod of Diamper*, *Orientalia Christiana Analecta*, 152 (Rome, 1958)

Antão is on the favourable side, Thaliath on the other. The controversy continues.

The two indispensable books on Roman-Eastern relations are:

- Beltrami, G. (cardinal bishop of Damascus) *La Chiesa caldea nel secolo dell'Unione*, *Orientalia Christiana*, 83 (Rome, 1933)

Many documents not elsewhere available are given in full.

- Giamil, S. *Genuinae Relationes inter Sedem Apostolicam et Assyriorum orientalium seu Chaldaeorum ecclesiam, nunc maiori ex parte primum editae, historicisque adnotationibus illustratae cura Abbatis Samuelis Giamil* (Rome, 1902)

Giamil is accurate, but adopts an ultra-Roman position.

Bishop Brown lists in his bibliography a number of works in Malayalam by Thomas Christians; but it does not appear that any of them has independent historical value.

On attempts to secure theological education and the formation of an Indian priesthood in India, our chief authority is:

- Mercês de Melo SJ, C. *The Recruitment and Formation of the Native Clergy in India 16th-19th Century An Historico-Canonical Study* (Lisbon: Agência Geral, 1955)

But Melo does not pay special attention to the needs of the Thomas Christians.

A more recent work is:

- Anathil SVD, G.M. *The Theological Formation of the Indian Clergy* (Poona, 1966)

See also:

- Podipara CMV, J. 'The training of the Syro-Malabar Clergy', *Ostkirchliche Studien*, 24 (Würzburg, 1975), pp. 27-37

The position of the archdeacon in the Church of the Thomas Christians has been studied in detail in:

## Chapter 10

Kollaparambil, J. *The Archdeacon of All-India: An Historico-Juridical Study* (Rome: Lateran University, 1972)

The writer has practical as well as historical ideas.

### CHAPTER 10 LIGHTS AND SHADOWS

I have not found any book dealing in general with the Portuguese missions in the period between 1552 and 1605. The second volume of da Silva Rêgo's classic *Missões* has not appeared; it is to be hoped that it is in preparation.

As before the two indispensable works are da Silva Rêgo, *Documentação*, and Wicki, J, *Documenta Indica*; but these reach only as far as the 1580s; for the last twenty years of the period under review, information is scanty, except for the affairs of the Thomas Christians, which have been dealt with in chapter 9.

Reference may be made to:

Bragança Pereira, A.B. *Historia Religiosa de Goa*, vol. 1 (Bastora, 1932)

Danvers, F.C. *The Portuguese in India, being a History of the Rise and Decline of their Eastern Empire* (2 vols, London: W.H. Allen, 1894; reprinted 1966)

Danvers is not much interested in the questions of religion, though his book is valuable as background.

de Saldanha, M.J.G. *Historia de Goa* (Nova Goa, 1925-6)

This contains references to the religious organisations.

Saldanha SJ, C.F. *A Short History of Goa* (Bombay: Anglo-Lusitano, 1952)

This is too slight to be of much service.

A source which has recently become available is:

*Documentação Ultramarina Portuguesa*, vol. III, 'Jesuit Missions in India 1582-1693' from *Brit. Mus. Add. Ms.* 9834, pp. 1-291 (Lisbon, 1963)

References to biographical articles on a number of the *padroado* bishops, mostly by J. Wicki SJ, will be found in the footnotes to chapter 10.

The Decrees of the Councils of Goa will be found in the Appendix to the *Bullarium Regum Portugalliae*.

These may be supplemented by two valuable articles:

Wicki, J. 'Quellen zum 3 Provinzialkonzil von Goa 1585' in *Annales Historiae Conciliorum*, 5 (Paderborn, 1973), pp. 382-407.

'Die unmittelbaren Auswirkungen des Konzils von Trient auf Indien' in *Ann. Hist. Pontificiae*, 1 (Rome, 1963), pp. 241-260

For some important decrees of the councils, see Appendix 22.

## Select Bibliographies

For the Inquisition in India, the basic study is:

Baião, A. *A Inquisição da Goa*; vol. I, 'Introdução a correspondência dos Inquisidores da Índia 1569-1630' (Lisbon, 1949); vol. II, 'Correspondência dos Inquisidores da Índia 1569-1630' (Coimbra, 1930)

Baião seems to have discovered and recorded everything that can be learned, from the rather scanty documents that have survived, about the Inquisition in the period covered by his work.

The results are summarised in:

Priolkar, A.K. *The Goa Inquisition: being a Quatercentenary commemoration Study of the Inquisition in India* (Bombay U.P., 1961)

Priolkar lists in his bibliography the various works of the French doctor C. Dellon, and the translation of these works in English, Portuguese etc.

The standard work on the 'New Christians' is:

de Azevedo, J.L. *História dos Cristãos Novos Portugueses* (Lisbon, 1975<sup>2</sup>)

For Valignano, in addition to the references in the text, the student will do well to turn to:

Schütte SJ, J.F. *Valignanos Missionsgrundsätze für Japan* (2 vols, Rome: Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, 1951, 1958)

Though this work deals only with Valignano's favoured Japan, much of the material is relevant also to the Indian missions. See also an exceptionally valuable review by C.R. Boxer, in *BSOAS*, 22 (1959), pp. 386-8.

Confraternities played an important part in the life of the church in India.

A careful study, based largely on the *Documentação* and the *Documenta Indica* is: da Rocha, L. 'As Confrarias da Goa', *Studia* (Lisbon, 1972), pp. 235-419

The author criticises the Confraternities for their exclusiveness, based sometimes on geography, but not infrequently on caste.

On the development of printing in India:

Priolkar, A.L. *The Printing Press in India: Its Beginnings and Early Development: being a Quatercentenary Commemoration Study of the advent of printing in India (in 1556)* (Bombay: Marathi Samshodana Mandala, 1958)

Priolkar gives valuable information, pays worthy tribute to the pioneers, and provides a number of excellent plates of early specimens of printing in India. Only chapters 1 and 2 deal with the period covered in this volume. There is no bibliography.

He refers to:

Gracias, A. *Os Portuguezes e o Estabelecimento da Imprensa na Índia* (Bastora, 1938)

I have not seen this book.

## Chapter 11

For the Coromandel coast

Besse SJ, L. *La Mission de Maduré* (Tiruchirāpaḷli, 1914)

This is still unsurpassed, but in parts needs to be rewritten in the light of later studies.

For Henry Henriques see the valuable study:

Wicki SJ, J. 'P. Henrique Henriques SJ (1520–1600): Ein vorbildlicher Missionar Indiens' originally in *Studia Missionalia*, 13 (Rome), pp. 113–68; this is now conveniently available in *Missionskirche im Orient*, NZM Supplement XXIV (1976), pp. 153–96

For the Todas much valuable information, affectionately recorded, is to be found in:

Emeneau, M.B. *Toda Songs* (Oxford, 1971), especially pp. xiii–xlvi

The complete bibliography for the Todas and all their works is:

Hockings, P. *The Nilgiri Hills; a bibliography for historians, geographers and anthropologists* (Berkeley: Univ. of California, 1962)

Rivers, W.H.R. *The Todas* (London: Macmillan, 1906)

The work of Rivers is, in the words of M.B. Emeneau 'still to be supplemented rather than superseded'.

For early Franciscan work in India see:

Meersman OFM, A. *The Ancient Franciscan Provinces in India (1500–1835)* (Bangalore: Christian Literature Society, 1971)

Meersman is authoritative, and the bibliography (unclassified) is remarkably complete.

This may be supplemented by reference to:

*The Franciscans in Bombay* (Bangalore, 1957)

*The Franciscans in Tamilnad*, NZM Supplement XII (Beckenried, 1962)

Farinha, A.L. *A Expansão da Fé no Extremo Oriente* (3 vols, Lisbon: Agência Geral, 1943ff)

Vol. II deals with India, and has information derived from Portuguese sources not easily available elsewhere.

### CHAPTER II INDIA IN THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

For the period now to be studied, the best general introduction is still:

Moreland, W.H. *From Akbar to Aurangzeb: A Study in Indian Economic History* (London: Macmillan, 1923)

Moreland's primary interest, as his title shows, is in trade and commerce; but he deals in detail with questions of administration, and also with the impact of the West on India. His outlook is limited; but what he gives is, of its kind, unsurpassed. He was a pioneer, among English writers, in recognising the importance of the Dutch and their records.

## *Select Bibliographies*

### *Jahāngīr*

Jahāngīr is best encountered in his own memoirs:

*The Turuk-i-Jahāngīrī or Memoirs of Jahāngīr*, trans. A. Rogers and H. Beveridge,  
Or. Trans. Fund. NS 19 and 20 (London: R.A.S., 1909, 1914)

The Preface is of value. The translators make an interesting comparison between Jahāngīr and 'James VI [and first of England], to whom, and to the Emperor Claudius, he bears a strange, even ludicrous, resemblance'.

See also a more recent edition, published for Susil Gupta (India) Privata Ltd, Calcutta in 1959; and a reprint of the translation from the Persian made by David Price in 1829 (Calcutta, 1972), with introduction by Aparajita Roy.

The story of the reign is well covered in:

Beni Prasad *History of Jahangir* (Allahabad, 1930<sup>2</sup>)

### *Shāh Jahān*

Shāh Jahān is a considerably less interesting person. His story is best dealt with in: Saksena, B.P. *History of Shahjahan of Dihli*, with foreword by Sir Wolseley Haig (Allahabad, 1932)

Saksena deals sensibly with the siege and sack of HUGH, of which details are given in Appendix 23. His work has been described as 'a successful attempt to fill a blank'. The bibliography is disappointing. (The bibliography in *History and Culture*, 7 records no other complete biography in English.)

Matters are very different with the last of the really great Mughuls:

### *Aurangzīb*

We are given the full details in:

Sir Jadunath Sarkar *The History of Aurungzib* (5 vols, Calcutta, 1912-24)

This is perhaps the greatest of all works by an Indian historian.

A short and competent account is:

Lane-Poole, Stanley *Aurangzīb, Rulers of India* (Oxford, 1893)

### *For the Marāthās*

Grant Duff, J.C. *A History of the Mahrattas* (3 vols, 1826, many times reprinted; currently Oxford, 1921, with introduction and notes by S.M. Edwardes)

This once classic history has now been replaced by:

Sardesai, G.S. *New History of the Mahrattas* (3 vols, Bombay: Phoenix Press, 1946-8)

This reliable account lacks the literary skill of Grant Duff. The first volume is almost wholly taken up with the career of Śivājī.



## Chapter 11

### *There are innumerable studies of Śivājī*

Perhaps the best balanced and most useful is:

Takakhav, N.S., and Keluskar, K.A. *The life of Shivaji Maharaj Founder of the Maratha Empire*, Foreword by N. Macnicol DD (Bombay: Manoranjan Press, 1921)

This work was written in Marāthi by K.A. Keluskar and adapted into English by N.S. Takakhav.

Most of these lives of Śivājī are unduly fulsome. The exception is:

Sarkar, Sir Jadunath *Shivaji and his Times* (London: Longmans, 1919, 1929<sup>3</sup>)

There is a valuable bibliography. Takakhav says rather peevishly that 'his sympathies are anywhere except with Shivaji and his gallant companions', p. vi.

All writers on the Marāthās show, without always emphasising it, the decay of the Mughul power, and the beginning of a new age for India.

### *The Coming of the Europeans*

No book can compare in thoroughness and depth of insight with:

Furber, H. *Rival Empires of Trade in the Orient* (Univ. of Minnesota Press, 1976)

### *The Dutch in India*

Most of the literature is naturally in Dutch, and inaccessible to those who do not know that language.

Terpstra, H. *De Nederlanders in Voor-Indië* (Amsterdam: P.N. van Kampen and Zoon N.V., 1947)

This is a brief and highly competent survey of the Dutch settlements in India only, with useful sketch maps; it includes also valuable notes on Dutch contributions to science and religion.

Of older books especially valuable is:

Pelsaert, Francis *Remonstratie* (1626; new ed. The Hague, 1979); English translation by W.H. Moreland and P. Geyl, *Jahangir's India: The Remonstratie of Fr Pelsaert* (Cambridge, 1925)

This is mainly commercial but gives vivid glimpses of social conditions in India of the seventeenth century.

The following books in English are valuable:

Alexander, P.C. *The Dutch in Malabar* (The Annamalai University, 1946)

This is a doctorate thesis, containing some valuable material, and continuing the story up to the end of Dutch power in India.

Boxer, C.R. *The Dutch Sea-borne Empire 1600-1800* (1965; Reprinted London: Hutchinsons, 1977)

### *Select Bibliographies*

This contains a great deal of valuable information, but comparatively little of this relates to continental India.

Panikkar, K.M. *A History of Kerala 1498-1801* (Annamalainagar: The Annamalai University, 1960); Section II, pp. 185-323 (a reprint of his work *Malabar and the Dutch*)

This work is well written, but is based on rather limited study of the available materials.

Poonen, T.I. *A Survey of the Rise of the Dutch Power in Malabar (1603-78)* (University of Travancore, 1948)

This is full and detailed, well based on original research; but naturally deals only with the Dutch in Malabar; as does Panikkar.

Raychaudhuri, T. *Jan Company in Coromandel 1605-1690 A Study in the Interrelations of European Commerce and Traditional Economics* (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1962)

The book has an excellent reproduction of a seventeenth century map and is the best account known to me of Dutch commercial policies in South India. Raychaudhuri shows that by 1690 the great days of Dutch enterprise in South India were over; but as late as 1683/4 and 1684/5 immense profits were made.

#### *The English in India*

On the English in India the only problem is the mass of information available.

As a general introduction, it would be hard to improve upon:

Foster, Sir William chap. 4, 'The East India Company', in *CHI*, vol. v (1929), pp. 76-115

#### *English Beginnings*

For the earliest period not much more is needed than two books by Sir William Foster.

1. Foster, W. *Early Travels in India 1583-1619* (Oxford, 1921)

This gives accounts of Ralph Fitch, John Mildenhall, William Hawkins, William Finch, Nicholas Withington, Thomas Coryat and Edward Terry. The editing is excellent. It may be supplemented by:

Locke, J.C. *The first Englishmen in India: Letters and Narratives of Sundry Elizabethans written by themselves* (London: Routledge, 1930)

2. Foster, Sir W. *The Embassy of Sir Thomas Roe to India 1615-19, as narrated in his journal and correspondence* (Oxford, 1926)

The full introduction (pp. xiii-lxxix) gives all the information necessary about the Indian background to the work of Roe. The extensive notes are of the greatest value.

## Chapter 11

Birdwood, Sir G. and Foster, W. (eds) *The First Letter Book of the East India Company 1600-19* (London, 1893)

The reader is taken back into the atmosphere of the earliest days of the Company and its concerns in India. See p. 53 for strict instructions as to 'the dayly invocaçon & religious wo<sup>p</sup>: & service of God' (letter of 3 March 1603/4). On pp. 478-9 is a delightful letter from the Great Mogul to King James I.

### *East India Company*

Histories of the East India Company are many. Mention should be made of:

Chaudhuri, K.N. *The English East India Company: The Study of an Early Joint Stock Company: 1600-1640* (London: Cass, 1965)

Perhaps the best is:

Wilbur, M.K. *The East India Company and the British Empire in the Far East* (New York, 1945, 1970<sup>2</sup>)

Woodruff, P. *The Men who ruled India*, vol. 1, 'The Founders' (London: Cape, 1953)

Woodruff pleasantly brings to life a number of the great figures of the early years.

### *English Trade*

Chaudhuri, K.N. *The Trading World of Asia and the East India Company 1660-1760* (Cambridge, 1978)

Chaudhuri goes beyond the limits of this volume, but is comprehensive, and full of valuable information. On every subject, other than religion, he has interesting things to say.

The best general account of the development of British trade in the East is still: Krishna, B. *Commercial Relations between India and England 1601 to 1757* (London: Routledge, 1924)

Includes studies also of the French, Dutch and Portuguese activities; with a fascinating list of all the ships employed in the Company's service.

See also:

Steensgard, N. *Carracks, Caravans and Companies: the Structural Crisis in the European Asia trade in the early 17th Century* (Odense, Denmark, 1973)

The capture of Ormuz by an Anglo-Persian force in 1622 entirely changed the balance of power and trade. A splendid book. But see also a critical review of the work, by M.A.P. Meilink-Roelofs in *Mare Luso-Indicum*, 4 (1980), pp. 1-43.

### *Biographies*

One of the best approaches is through biographies of those who played a leading part in the development of events. Among these may be mentioned:

### Select Bibliographies

- Charnock, J. in *DNB*, vol. IV (1908), pp. 129-32  
Child, John in *DNB*, vol. IV, pp. 243-4  
Child, Josiah in *DNB*, vol. IV, pp. 244-5  
Oxenden, G. in *DNB*, vol. XV (1909), pp. 9-10  
Temple, Sir R. *Diaries of Streynsham Master* (2 vols, London: John Murray, 1911)  
Wright, A. *Annesley of Surat and his times* (London: Andrew Melrose, Ltd, 1918)  
*Early English Adventurers in the East* (London: Andrew Melrose, Ltd, 1917)  
Yule, H. (ed.) *Diary of William Hedges, '1681-87'* (3 vols, London: Hakluyt Soc., 1877-89)

#### *The French in India*

- Sen, S.P. *The French in India; First Establishment and Struggle* (Univ. of Calcutta, 1947)  
Dr Sen supplies a good general survey. His second volume, *The French in India* (Calcutta: Mukhopadhyay, 1958), deals with the later period, and has to a large extent rendered obsolete the massive work:  
Malleison, G.B. *History of The French in India from the Founding of Pondichery in 1674 to the Capture of that place in 1761* (London: W.H. Allen, 1893)  
This history was meritorious in its day. Only the first chapter is relevant to this book.

An older and larger work, which still retains its value is:

- Kaepelin, P. *Les origines de l'Inde française; la Compagnie des Indes Orientale et François Martin . . . 1664-1719* (Paris: A. Challamel, 1908)

For the early period our best source of first-hand information is:

- Martineau, A. (ed.) *Mémoires de François Martin, Fondateur de Pondichéry, '1665-1696'*; introduction by H. Froidevaux (3 vols, Paris: Ed. Coloniales, 1931, 1932, 1934)

This provides an extremely detailed account of all that happened in French India in thirty years, by one who was at the very heart of affairs. It contains good indices, and rather full analysis of the contents of each chapter, which make reference easy. There is a valuable biographical note by H. Froidevaux.

The other main source of information on the early French attempts to settle in India is now available in English in the excellent edition with a valuable introduction: Fawcett, Sir Charles and Lady *The Travels of the Abbé Carré in India and the Near East 1672-1674* (2 vols, London: The Hakluyt Society, 1947)

The calligraphy of the Abbé leaves nothing to be desired, and he is a vivid narrator of what he had seen and experienced: 'he surpasses Clarendon in imagination and sense of humour' (p. xxxi). His full name was Bartholomew Carré de Chartres, and he seems to have been born about 1639/40 (p. xxvi).

## Chapter 11

Of the Travellers of the period, five deserve special mention, three of the five being Frenchmen.

Bernier, F. *Travels in the Mogol Empire*, ed. A. Constable and V.A. Smith (Oxford, 1934<sup>2</sup>)

Bernier is the best of all. He was in India 1656–68, and saw at first hand and recorded a great many important events.

Laboullaye le Gouz, F. *Voyages et observations . . . où sont décrites les religions, gouvernements, etc. de . . . Perse, Arabie, Grand Mogul, Bijapour, Indes Orientales . . . et autres lieux . . . où il a séjourné* (Paris, 1653, 1657<sup>2</sup>)

This book quickly became so popular that it has to be reckoned among the main stimuli for French adventure in Asia in the seventeenth century.

Manucci, N. *Storia do Mogor*, ed. W. Irvine (4 vols, London: John Murray, 1907–8)

Manucci, a Venetian, left Europe in 1653, at the age of fourteen and died in Madras c. 1717. He was, therefore, a witness of many of the events which he describes.

Tavernier, J.B. *Travels in India*, Eng. trans. ed. W. Crooke (2 vols, London, 1925<sup>2</sup>)

Tavernier was in the East, not only in India, at intervals between 1639 and 1669.

Sen, Surendranath (ed.) *Indian Travels of Thévenot and Careri* (New Delhi, 1949)

Jean de Thévenot (1633–67) arrived in India on 10 January 1666. He travelled through many parts of India and even as far as Kabul. His travels, published in French in three volumes between 1664 and 1684 were translated into English by D. Lovell and published in London in 1687. Part II only is reproduced by Sen.

Giovanni Francesco Careri was eighteen years younger than Thévenot (b. 1651). He left Europe in 1664, and finally returned in 1695. His memoirs immediately became immensely popular:

*Giro del Mondo* (6 vols, Naples, 1699–1700); Eng. trans. Awnsham and Churchill, *A Collection of Voyages and Travels* (1704, only Part III)

The translation, 'Containing the most remarkable things that he saw in Indostan', is utilised by Sen. Careri made a number of contacts with Christianity in India but records little that is of value for the purpose of this book.

For a general survey of the experience of the French in India see:

Glachant, R. *Histoire de l'Inde des Français* (Paris: Plon, 1965)

It is brilliantly written, interesting, and very well illustrated, but allusive rather than informative.

## Select Bibliographies

### Denmark

There is little to report of the Danes in the period up to 1685. The history of their Company is:

Larsen, K. *De danske-ostindiske Koloniers Historie* (2 vols, Copenhagen, 1907, 1908)

See Appendix 24 on the Diary of the Icelander Jón Ólafsson.

### CHAPTER 12 THE MISSION OF MATHURAI

No one has yet done for Robert Nobili what Fr Schurhammer and Fr Wicki have done for Francis Xavier, by publishing a complete, reliable and annotated edition of all his letters.

Bertrand SJ, J. *La Mission de Maduré d'après les documents inédits* (4 vols, Paris, 1847-54)

Bertrand used a considerable number of them, having had access to the *Lettres Édifiantes et Curieuses* (Paris, ed. of 1780-3), and to other documents. But it is known, from his own admissions, that Bertrand was a less than scrupulous editor. His work must be the starting-point for any serious study of the mission, but it is time that it was replaced by something better and more critical.

Apart from the letters used by Bertrand, the following collections should be noted:  
Dahmen SJ, P. 'Trois lettres spirituelles inédites de Robert de Nobili', *RHM*, 16 (1938), pp. 180-5

'La correspondance de Robert de Nobili', *RHM*, 12 (1935), pp. 579-607

Wicki SJ, J. 'Sei lettere inedite del P. Roberto Nobili SJ', *AHSI*, 37 (1968), pp. 129-44

'Lettere familiari del P. Roberto Nobili SJ, 1619-1649', *AHSI*, 38 (1969), pp. 313-25

Next after Bertrand follows as an authority:

Dahmen SJ, P. *Robert de Nobili, l'Apôtre des Brahmes, Première apologie, 1610 (Responsio)*, *Bibl. Miss.*, 3 (Paris, 1931)

*Robert de Nobili SJ: Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der Missionsmethode und der Indologie* (Münster i. Westf., 1924)

*Un Jésuite Brahme: Robert de Nobili*, *Museum Lessianum Sectio Missionaria*, 1 (Bruges, 1924)

The most recent life of Nobili known to me is:

Bachmann, P.R. *Robert Nobili 1577-1656: Ein missionsgeschichtlicher Beitrag zum christlichen Dialog mit Hinduismus*, *Inst. Hist. S.I.* (Rome, 1972)

This work is particularly rich in footnotes and references. Its weakness lies in the fact that Fr Bachmann seems not to be familiar with any Indian language, and his knowledge of Hinduism is hardly adequate to his task.

## Chapter 12

Cronin, Vincent *A Pearl to India: the Life of Robert de Nobili* (London: Hart Davis, 1959)

The work of a journalist and not of a theologian, it is brightly written, though uncritical.

Ferrolì SJ, D. *The Jesuits in Malabar*, vol. I (Bangalore, 1939), pp. 339–54; vol. II (Bangalore, 1951), pp. 378–487

Ferrolì writes of the Madura Mission, carrying the story forward into the eighteenth century, and to the story of the Malabar rites.

Heras SJ, H. *The Aravidu Dynasty of Vijayanagar* (Madras, 1927)

This is to be consulted on certain points.

So we come to the noble contribution of:

Rajamañickam SJ, Fr S.; the English works of this indefatigable scholar, which have to be recorded here, are the following:

*The First Oriental Scholar* (Tirunelveli, 1972)

*Robert de Nobili on Adaptation* [the statement prepared by Nobili for use at the Goa Consultation of 1619] (Pālayamkoṭṭai, 1971)

*Robert de Nobili on Indian Customs* (*The Informatio de quibusdam moribus nationis indicae*) (Pālayamkoṭṭai, 1972)

The Tamil works rescued and printed by Fr Rajamañickam SJ are considered in Appendix 27.

Rocaries SJ, A. *Roberto de Nobili SJ ou le sannyasi chrétien* (Toulouse, 1967)

This is a pleasantly written book, with some useful selections, in French translation, from the writings of Nobili.

Justice has now been done to Nobili's predecessor in Mathurai, Fr Gonçalo Fernandez SJ, in:

Wicki SJ, J. *Die Schrift des P. Gonçalo Fernandez über die Brahmanen und Dharmasastra 1616* (Aschendorf, 1957)

There is a valuable review of this work by JDMD in *BSOAS*, 21 (1958), pp. 213–14.

For an understanding of the political background to the mission a contribution has been made by

Aiyar, R. Satyanatha and Aiyangar, S. Krishnaswami *History of the Nāyaks of Madura* (Oxford, 1924)

There are many references to the Jesuit missionaries and their records in this work.

The first serious attempt to write the history of the country and the period was made by:

### Select Bibliographies

Nelson, J.H. *The Madura Country* (Madras, 1868)

Nelson, who was in the Madras Civil Service, made a massive collection of information on every kind of topic, including the history of Christianity in the area.

The centre of interest in this period is John de Britto. All serious study must start from the work of his brother:

de Britto, F. Pereira *História do nascimento vida e martyrio do Beato J. de Britto da Companhia de Jesus, Martyr da Asia, e Protomartyr da Missão do Maduré* (1772; Lisbon, 1852<sup>2</sup>); Eng. trans. from ed. of 1852 by Antonia Maria Teixeira, bishop of Mylapore (Tanjore, 1932)

Prat, J.M. *Histoire du bienheureux J. de Britto, composée sur des documents authentiques* (Paris, 1853)

This is a careful piece of work, and subsequent study has added little to what Fr Prat had discovered.

#### CHAPTER 13 THE THOMAS CHRISTIANS AGAIN

For the Thomas Christians again, as before, the best general survey is:

Brown, L.W. *The Indian Christians of St Thomas*, chaps. 4 and 5 (Cambridge, 1956)

But as Bishop Brown ruefully and truthfully records, 'We have nothing from the Indian side to illuminate our knowledge of the period.'

The contemporary, or near contemporary, works are the following:

Joseph of St Mary *Prima Spedizione all'Indie Orientali del Padre Giuseppe di S. Maria CD, . . . delegato apostolico ne regni de' Malavari, ordinata da Nostro Signore Alessandro Settimo* (Rome, 1666)

*Seconda spedizione all'Indie Orientali di Monsignor Sebastiani, Fr Giuseppe di S. Maria CD, prima vescovo di Hierapoli, oggi di Bisignano e barone di S. Sofia, ordinata da Alessandro VII di gloriosa memoria* (Rome, 1672)

These works, naturally, are written strictly from the Carmelite point of view.

Paulinus of S. Bartholomew *India Orientalis Christiana continens fundationes ecclesiarum, seriem episcoporum, missiones, schismata, persecutiones, reges, viros illustres* (Rome, 1794)

Paulinus was in Travancore from 1776 to 1789 as vicar general, and had access to a great many documents. His encyclopaedic work is invaluable; but he is not an impartial writer, and his work has to be used with a good deal of caution.

Philippus a SS Trinitate OCD *Itinerarium Orientale* (Lyon, 1649)

Vincent Mary of S. Catherine of Siena *Il Viaggio all'Indie Orientali* (Venice, 1678)

For an informative account of Paulinus, see:

Fernandez OCD, Dr D. 'Father Paulinus a Sancto Bartolomeo OCD', *ICHR*, 12, 2 (Dec., 1978), pp. 109–20



## Chapter 13

Fernandez refers to the earlier work:

Wetzl, L. *Der oesterreichische Karmelit Paulinus a S. Bartolomeo: Persönlichkeit und Werk* (Vienna, 1936)

Not much of value is to be derived from:

de Croze, M.V. *Histoire du christianisme des Indes* (2 vols, The Hague, 1758<sup>2</sup>)  
or

Raulin, J.F. *Historia Ecclesiae Malabaricae* (Rome, 1745)

The latter is of greater value for the earlier period.

Among modern works the most comprehensive is:

Ferrolì SJ, D. *The Jesuits in Malabar* (2 vols, Bangalore, 1939, 1951)

Unfortunately vol. II has become a very rare book. Some libraries contain it in microfilm. As noted before, the weakness of Ferrolì is that he very rarely gives adequate references for the documents that he quotes, which are not elsewhere accessible. Fr Thekedatu remarks tartly that 'he was a professor of physical science, and seems to have taken up the writing of history only as a hobby' (*Troubled Days*, p. 4 n. 8; see below).

A great deal of light has been thrown on the period under review in:

Thekedatu SDB, J. *The Troubled Days of Francis Garcia SJ, Archbishop of Cranganore (1641-59)* (Rome: Univ. Gregoriana, 1972)

This is based on extensive research in a number of archives. Fr Thekedatu refers in the bibliography to a number of as yet unpublished dissertations.

Bufalini OCD, P. Faustino "'L'Opera Pacificatrice" di Mons. Giuseppe Sebastiani Vescovo Missionario OCD, nello scisma dei Christiani di S. Tommaso, Malabar (1653-1663)' (Rome, 1959)

An unpublished dissertation based almost entirely on the documents of the Carmelite Order, this work is known to me only through the references made by Fr Thekedatu.

Mention should perhaps be made of the excellent survey provided by a layman: Mackenzie, G.T. 'Christianity in Travancore', *Travancore State Manual* (Trivandrum, 1906), vol. II, pp. 135-223

Werth SM, K.P. *Das Schisma der Thomaschristen unter Erzbischof Franciscus Garzia: dargestellt nach den Akten des Archivs der Sacra Congregatio de Propaganda Fide* (Limburg, 1937)

This is well written, and contains much information of value; but being based only on the archives of the Propaganda it tends to be one-sided. And Fr Werth did not know the country, nor the people, of whom he is writing.

Wicki SJ, J. (ed.) *O Homem das trinta e duas Perfeições e outras Histórias* (Lisbon, 1958)

This book contains in the two Appendices documents which relate to the theme of this chapter.

## *Select Bibliographies*

### CHAPTER 14 OTHER ROMAN CATHOLIC MISSIONS

No fully satisfactory account of Roman Catholic missions in the seventeenth century exists. Information has to be collected from many sources.

Müllbauer, M. *Geschichte der katholischen Missionen in Ost-Indien*

Müllbauer is as before indispensable; but the account he gives is brief; and many of the sources now available were not known to him.

#### *Propaganda*

The historian now has at his disposal an immense new source of information in: SCPF, *Memoria Rerum: 350 Anni a Servizio delle Missioni* (Sacred Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith, Rome); vol. I. i, ed. J. Metzler (Herder, Rome, Freiburg i. Br., Vienna, 1971)

This deals mainly with the period 1622–1700, i.e. with the foundation of Propaganda and its early years under Francis Ingoli.

The Essays naturally deal with affairs mainly from the point of view of Rome, but are a valuable corrective to accounts of the same affairs as seen from India.

#### *Vicars Apostolic*

Two full-length studies of Matthew de Castro, the first vicar apostolic have been produced:

Cavallera *imc*, C. (bishop of Nyeri) 'Matteo de Castro Mabalo' (Rome, 1936)

This is only mimeographed; I have not been able to see it.

Ghesquière OSB, T. *Matthieu de Castro, premier vicaire apostolique aux Indes; une création de la Propagande à ses débuts* (Louvain, 1937)

This is specially valuable for its many quotations from the writings of Castro himself.

For the later vicars apostolic in India, reference may be made to:

Jann, A. *Die katholischen Missionen* (as in chap. 6)

For a judgement from a strictly Portuguese point of view, see:

Silva, S. *History of Christianity in Canara*, vol. I (1957); vol. II (Karwar, 1961)

This work includes important documents on Thomas de Castro from the Vatican archives.

#### *Jesuits*

For the story of the Jesuits, the chief authority is naturally the series of Jesuit letters.

For a careful and sober judgement on the historical value of these, see:

Correia-Afonso SJ, J. *Jesuit Letters and Indian History* (Bombay, 1955)

## Chapter 14

For good measure this writer gives us, in appendix D, pp. 176–86, a ‘Tentative List of the Principal Editions of the Jesuit Letters from India, 1542–1773’, an admirable survey of Jesuit publications throughout the period indicated.

The first letters to be published appear to be those of 1581.

Two major series belong to the seventeenth century:

1. *Annuae litterae Societatis Jesu ad Patres et Fratres eiusdem Societatis* (1606–82).

These have not been published in full, but see details in J. Correia-Afonso SJ, *Jesuit Letters and Indian History* (Oxford, 1969).

The letters for 1581 to 1614 were published in thirty volumes; and then, after a long interval, those for 1650 to 1654. It is clear that much valuable information has disappeared, probably for ever. These did not deal only with Indian affairs.

The best known series:

2. *Lettres Édifiantes et Curieuses, écrites des Missions Etrangères par quelques Missionnaires de la Compagnie de Jésus* (34 vols, Paris, 1702–76)

This series deals almost entirely with a period later than that recorded in this volume. No final estimate of the historical value of these letters has yet been reached.

### *Benedict de Goes*

Maclagan, E.D. in *Jesuits* etc. pp. 335–42

This brief study (see pp. 341–3) contains some interesting information.

For the English reader the best starting-point is the account given in:

Payne, C.H. *Jahangir and the Jesuits* (London: Routledge, 1930), pp. 119–84

Payne’s account is mainly based on the *Relaçam* of Ferdinand Guerreiro, parts II (1605), IV (1609) and V (1611), to which full references are given.

Tacchi-Venturi, Fr P. was the fortunate discoverer of a number of manuscripts of Fr Matthew Ricci SJ. These were published under the title:

*Opere Storiche del P. Matteo Ricci* (2 vols, Macerata, 1911)

The reconstruction of the journey of Goes is in vol. I, pp. 526–58.

Wessels SJ, Fr J. *Early Jesuit Travellers in Central Asia 1603–1721* (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1924)

Wessels is accurate and reliable.

### *The Mission to Mogor*

For the later history of the mission to Mogor, the best general survey is

Maclagan, E.D. *Jesuits*, chapters 5, 6, 7, 13, 14, 16, 17

## Select Bibliographies

For the work of Jerome Xavier, as before:

Camps OFM, A. *Jerome Xavier and the Muslims of the Mogul Empire* (Schöneck-Beckenried, 1957)

This is authoritative. The catalogue of the surviving letters of Xavier, given on pp. 50–60, is of special value.

Hernández SJ, Angel Santos *Jeronimo Javier SJ*

This biography enters into considerable detail, and is a most commendable work, limited by the fact that Fr Santos is not familiar with any Indian language.

‘Eulogy of Fr Jerome Xavier SJ, Missionary in Mogor’, in *Chrono-Historia de la Compañia de Jesús en la Provincia de Toledo* (Madrid, 1710)

This interesting eulogy has been printed by Fr H. Hosten SJ in *JASB* NS 23 (1927), pp. 109–30.

Of the Mission to Tibet, an interesting account is given in:

Maclagan, E.D. *Jesuits*, pp. 335–68

This is largely based on:

Wessels SJ, J. *Early Jesuit Travellers in Central Asia 1603–1723*

*Il Nuovo Ramusio* (Rome: Librarie dello Stato, 1952ff)

This will in course of time publish all accounts of European contacts with Tibet; a notable edition, beautifully produced.

Important is:

Toscano, G.M. *Alla scoperta del Tibet. Relazioni dei Missionari del sec. XVII* (Bologna: ed. Miss. Ital., 1977), a much improved edition of *La Prima missione cattolica nel Tibet* (1951)

But the writer seems not to have seen the documents preserved in the ARSI.

The story of the Mission to the Fisher Coast is continued, as before, in:

Besse SJ, L. *La Mission de Maduré* (Tiruchirappalli, 1914)

For the work of the Theatines, the classic work is:

Ferro, B. *Istoria delle Missioni de' Chierici Regolari Teatini, con la descrizione de Regni, Provincie, Città, Fede, Riti, e Costumi della Genti, ove andarono, e passarono le Missionari, con li viaggi pericolosi, fatiche fattevi, e frutto raccoltovi per la Cattolica Religione* (2 vols, Rome, 1704)

This work, of which there is a copy in the Bodleian Library, Oxford, was used by Müllbauer. It deals mainly with Georgia and India.

Spinola, Antonio Ardizzone *Cordel Triplicado de amor . . . lançado em tres livros de sermões . . . pregou-os na India na See Primacial de Goa, e em Lisboa na Capella Real* (Lisbon, 1680)

## Chapter 14

Spinola was a notable Theatine champion of the development of the indigenous ministry.

### *The Franciscans*

The story of the Franciscans in the earlier period has been brilliantly lighted up, as is indicated in the text, by the discovery in the Vatican Library in 1924 of a work long believed to have been lost:

da Trindade, Paulo *Conquista Espiritual do Oriente*, ed. Fr Fernando Felix Lopes (3 vols, Lisbon, 1962-7)

Paulo, like so many historians of missions, was a little too much inclined to delight in the marvellous. But it is impossible to exaggerate the value of his work, based on years of research in the very areas with which he deals.

The later period can be followed in the many volumes of A. Meersman, especially: Meersman OFM, A. *The Ancient Franciscan Provinces in India (1500-1835)* (Bangalore, 1971)

and an earlier work:

*The Friars Minor or Franciscans in India* (Karachi, 1943)

All Fr Meersman's works are generously supplied with bibliographies.

Note also the study:

Lopes OFM, F.F. 'Franciscans in Portuguese India', *Studia*, 9 (Lisbon, 1962), pp. 29-142

For the Capuchins, the standard work is:

da Cesinale, R. *Storia delle Missioni dei Cappuccini* (3 vols, Paris, Rome, 1867, 1872, 1873)

This deals with the history up to 1700.

A shorter account, with an excellent bibliography, is:

de Terzorio, C. *Manuale Historicum Missionum Ordinis Minorum Capuccinorum* (Isola del Liri, 1926)

And in Italian:

de Terzorio, C. *Le Missioni dei Minori Cappuccini: Sunto Storico* (Rome, 1913ff)

A Capuchin who from time to time crosses our path is Père Norbert (1697-1769), whose real name was Peter Parisot.

Norbert, Père *Mémoires historiques présentées en 1744 a Benôit XIV sur les missions des pères Jesuites aux Indes Orientales*

This is a bitterly anti-Jesuit work, the reliability of which would not be admitted by any Jesuit. There is an interesting article on him in:

*Dict. de Théol. Catholique*, 11, cols. 2040-3, s.v. Parisot, by E. Ammann.

More briefly in:

## Select Bibliographies

*Lexikon für Theologie und Kirche* and *Enciclopedia Cattolica* s.v.

### Augustinians

A considerable amount of information about the Augustinians is now available, but it has to be sought for the most part in periodicals.

Noteworthy are the following studies.

de Gaça OSA, Simon 'Breve relazione dei conventi e missione delli Religiosi de Sant' Agostino dell' Indie orientali' (1682)

The report is printed in full in:

*Anal. Aug.*, 4 and 5 (1911-13)

Much space is given to the affairs of Bengal and Arakan.

Hartmann OSA, A. 'The Augustinians in Golden Goa; according to a manuscript by Felix of Jesus OSA', *Anal. Aug.*, 30 (1967), pp. 5-147

'The Augustinian Mission of Bengal 1579-1834', *Anal. Aug.*, 41 (1978), pp. 159-213

This is an authoritative study.

Lopez OSA, T.A. 'Expansión de la Orden de San. Ag. por la India', *Missionalia Hispanica*, 28 (Madrid, 1971), pp. 265-322, and 29 (1972), pp. 5-59.

'La Orden de San Agustín en la India (1572-1622)', *Studia* (Lisbon, July 1974), pp. 563-707; (December 1974), pp. 145-236

This is an elaborate study, but contains a good deal that is already available in printed sources.

## CHAPTER 15 NON-ROMAN CATHOLIC CHRISTIANITY IN INDIA

A new book on early Anglican Christianity in India is much needed:

Chatterton, E. *History of the Church of England in India since the Early Days of the East India Company* (London: SPCK, 1924)

This is based on a good deal of research; but it is annoying in its lack of exact references, and disregard for some of the principles of scholarly historical writing.

Gibbs, M.E. *The Anglican Church in India 1600-1970* (Delhi: ISPCK, 1972)

This is disappointingly thin on the early period, and the arrangement of the bibliography is rather confusing.

Much can be learned by working through the indices of the many volumes of:  
Danvers, F.C. *Letters Received by the East India Company*, vols 1-VI (1896ff)

Fawcett, Sir Charles *Court Minutes of the East India Company*, vols 1-XI (1907ff)  
*The English Factories in India*, NS, vols 1-IV (1936ff)

Foster, W. *The English Factories in India*, vols 1-XIII (1906ff)

## Chapter 15

Of books written in the seventeenth century, three stand out above all others as giving a clear picture of what Anglicans were and tried to be in that remote time and place.

Foster, Sir W. (ed.) *The Embassy of Sir Thomas Roe to India 1615-19 as narrated in his journal and correspondence* (Oxford, 1926)

The editing is unexceptionable. Roe stands out as a great man and a great Christian.

Ovington, J. *A Voyage to Suratt in the year 1689, giving a large Account of that City, and its Inhabitants, and of the English Factory there*, ed. H.G. Rawlinson (Oxford, 1929)

In this edition the introduction and bibliography are most helpful. The illustrations are few but well chosen.

Terry, E. *A Voyage to East India* (London, 1755; reprinted 1777)

Terry's prolixity tends to conceal from the modern reader his real merits as an observer. His shorter account is printed by:

Foster, W. (ed.) *Early Travels in India 1583-1619* (Oxford, 1921), pp. 291-332

Of later works three stand out as deserving of special commendation:

Anderson, P. *The English in Western India: being the Early History of the Factory at Surat, of Bombay, and the subordinate Factories on the Western Coast from the Earliest Period until the Commencement of the Eighteenth Century* (Bombay: Smith Taylor and Co., 1856)

Anderson is well-informed, prudent and judicious; he gives a fair measure of space to matters of religion.

Hyde, H.B. *Parochial Annals of Bengal: being a History of the Bengal Ecclesiastical Establishment of the Honourable East India Company in the 17th and 18th Centuries, Compiled from Original Sources* (Calcutta, 1901)

'The local records of the Company were almost entirely destroyed in the sack of Calcutta by the Nawab's army in 1756' (p. v). In consequence the story is much fuller for the later than for the earlier period.

Penny, F. *The Church in Madras, being a history of the Ecclesiastical and Missionary Action of the East India Company in the Presidency of Madras in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries* (London: Smith Elder, 1904)

Penny seems to have tracked down every existing source, and we owe to him knowledge of many persons and events which without his work would have remained unknown. But he has limited his purview to 'ecclesiastical events as they affected or were affected by the East India Company and its local government at Fort St George' (p. vii). Pp. 1-139 deal with the period covered in this volume. A complete list of chaplains and missionaries is on pp. 661ff.

Additional material is to be found in:

### Select Bibliographies

Ashley-Brown, W. *On the Bombay Coast and Deccan: the Origin and History of the Bombay Diocese: a Record of 300 years' work for Christ in Western India* (London, 1937)

and

Hill, E.E. *History of the Chaplains' Department in Western India*, Ch. Historical Pamphlets No. 7 (London: SPCK, 1920)

The only biography of an English chaplain in India in the early days known to me is:

Neill, E.D. *Memoir . . . of Patrick Copland* (New York, 1871)

There is a copy of this work in the British Library.

For the work of the Dutch Reformed Church in India and Indonesia, the two classic works are:

Van Boetzelaer Van Dubbeldam, Baron C.W.T. *De Protestansche Kerk in Nederlandsch Indië* (The Hague, 1947)

*De Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland en de Zending in Oost-Indië in de Dagen der Oost-Indische Compagnie* (Utrecht, 1906)

See Appendix 29 for:

Rogierius, Abraham *Open Door to the hidden heathen Religion (De open-deure tot het verborgen Heydendom)* (Leyden, 1651); new ed. by Prof. W. Caland (The Hague, 1915)

See further Appendix 31 for:

Baldaeus, Philip *Nauwkeurige beschrijvinge van Malabar en Choromandel . . . Afgoderye der Oostindische Heydenen* (Amsterdam, 1672); Eng. trans. *A True and Exact Description of the most celebrated East Indian Coasts of Malabar and Coromandel; and also of the Isle of Ceylon. Also a most circumstantial and complete account of the idolatry of the Pagans in the East Indies*, in Churchill's *Collection of Voyages and Travels*, vol. II (London, 1752), pp. 509-793. New ed. of the *Afgoderye* by A.J. de Jong.

For John Casarius and his contribution to the *Hortus Indicus Malabaricus*, see Appendix 30.

An older work is:

van Troostenburg de Bruyn, C.A.L. *De Hervormde Kerk in Nederl. Oost-Indië onder de O.I. Compagnie*

This deals mainly with Indonesia.

Through the kindness of Professor J. van den Berg of the University of Leiden, I have been able to see a rare book:

van Troostenburg de Bruyn, C.A.L. *Biographisch Woordenboek van Oost-Indische Predikanten* (Nijmegen: Milborn, 1893)



## Chapter 15

This contains brief biographies of all ministers, more than a thousand, sent to the Dutch possessions in Asia in the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Few among these served in continental India, and still fewer during the period covered by this book.

There are innumerable references in the sources to members of various Eastern churches, usually grouped together as Armenians. I do not know of any complete study of this continuous presence of Christianity in India. The only way to track down the references is to use the indexes to the standard works of history, secular and Christian.

Seth, Mesrovb J. *Armenians in India* (Calcutta: The Author, 1937)

This is a meritorious collection of sources and evidences, though somewhat uncritical in detail.

Macfarlane, Iris *The Black Hole, or the Makings of a Legend* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1975)

The author has collected a number of references to Armenians in India, all unfavourable.

Abramyan, R.A. *Armyanskie Istochniki XVIII Veka ob Indii* [Eighteenth Century Armenian Sources on India] (Erevan, 1968)

For this interesting Russian work see Appendix 32.



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