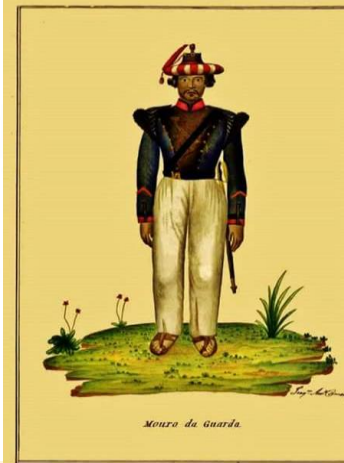




Exploration of Portuguese-Bengal Cultural Heritage through Museological Studies



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EUROPE

on the GANGES



Portuguese

Dutch

French

Flemish

English

Danish

English



Line of Presentation

Part I

- **Brief history of Portuguese in Bengal**
- **Portuguese-Bengal cultural interactions**
- **Present day continuity**
- **A Gap**

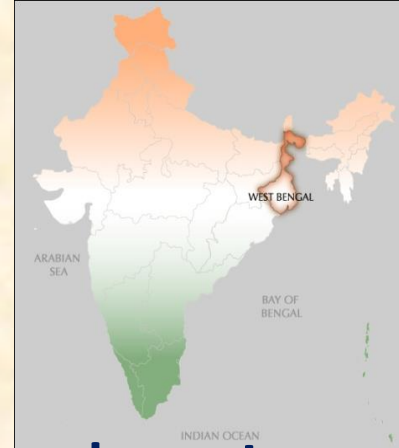
Part II

- **University of Calcutta**
- **Department of Museology**
- **Museological Studies/Researches**
- **Way Forwards**



Portuguese and Bengal

Brief History



- The Portuguese as first European explorer to visit in Bengal was Joao da Silveira in 1518 , couple of decades later of the arrival of Vasco Da Gama at Calicut in 1498.
- Bengal was the important area for sugar, saltpeter, indigo and cotton textiles
- Portuguese traders began to frequent Bengal for trading and to aid the reigning Nawab of Bengal against an invader, Sher Khan.
- A Portuguese captain Tavarez received by Akbar, and granted permission to choose any spot in Bengal to establish trading post.





Portuguese settlements in Bengal

In Bengal Portuguese had three main trade points

- **Saptagram:** Porto Pequeno or Little Haven
- **Chittagong:** Porto Grande or Great Haven.
- **Hooghly or Bandel:** In 1599 Portuguese constructed a Church of the Basilica of the Holy Rosary, commonly known as Bandel Church. Till today it stands as a memorial to the Portuguese settlement in Bengal.



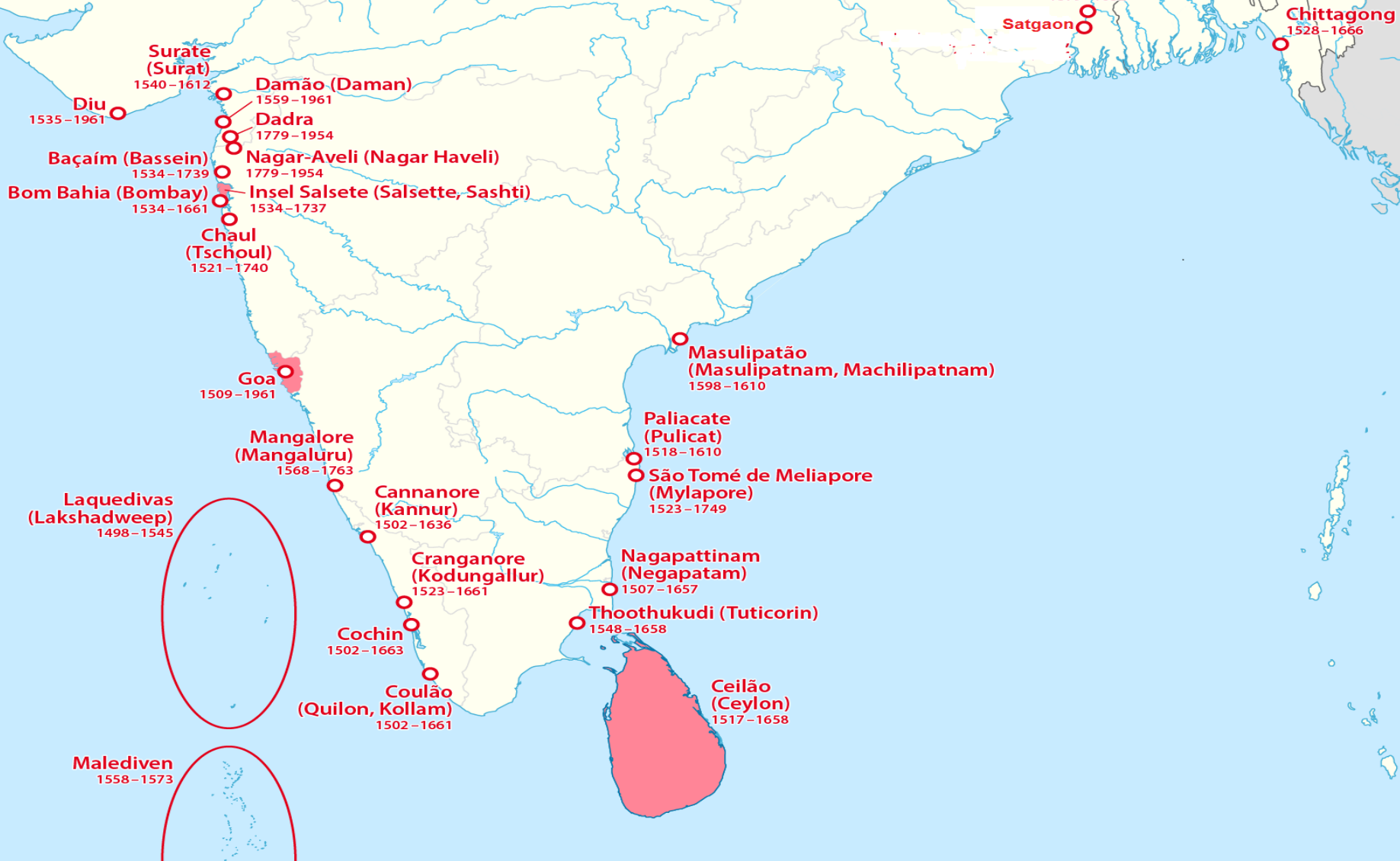
The Moghuls eventually subdued the Portuguese and conquered Chittagong and Hooghly. By the 18th century the Portuguese presence had almost disappeared from Bengal.



Portuguese settlements in Bengal

Estado português da Índia

Portuguese India • Inde portugaise • Portugiesisch-Indien





Portuguese remains in Bengal

- **Now, in Bengal there are only a few physical vestiges of the Portuguese presence, a few churches and some ruins.**

But the Portuguese influence lives on Bengal in other ways—

- **Few descendents of Luso-Indians (descendants of the offspring of mixed unions between Portuguese and local women) and descendants of Christian converts are living in present Bengal.**
- **Contribution of Portuguese in Socio-Cultural life of Bengali people and Bengal**



Portuguese Bengal Cultural Interactions

- **Impact on Socio-Cultural Life**

Bengali Language

Agriculture

Bengali Cuisine

Trade and Commerce

- **Impression in aesthetic life**

Architecture

Art Works in Indian Museums

Terracotta

Painting



Bengali Language and Portuguese Contributions

- A Portuguese Missionary, Manuel Da Assunpção wrote the first Bengali grammar in 1743, named as *Vocabulario em idioma Bengalla, e Portuguez*, which was printed in Latin characters in Lisbon.
- He wrote another book – *Crepar Xaxtrer Orth, Bhed*. It was a bilingual missionary book published in Lisbon in 1735, written in Roman.
- The Portuguese language remained a *lingua franca in Bengal till late 18th century*.
- In Modern Bengali, articles of common use, items used in Christian services, and plants often go by their Portuguese names
- Several Portuguese characters are found in many Bengali Literatures. One of such characters was Alvarez in famous Bengali Novel '*Chander Pahar*' *Mountain of the Moon*, written by Bibhuti Bhusan Chattopadhyaya in 20th Century. This was featured few times, lastly in 2014.

Vocabulario em
idioma Bengalla, e
Portyguez :
dividido em duas
partes : dedicado

Assunção, Manuel
da



Portuguese words in Bengali Vocabulary

Word	Meaning	Portuguese Word	Word	Meaning	Portuguese Word
almari	closet	armário	perek	nail	prego
istri	to iron	estirar	anarôs	pineapple	ananás
ispat	steel	espada	kaju	cashew	caju
kamij	shirt	camisa	kôpi	cauliflower	couve
gamla	basket	gamela	pêpe	papaya	papaia
chabi	key	chave	girja	church	igreja
janala	window	janela	Jishu	Jesus	Jesu
fita	lace, ribbon	fita	ingrej	English	inglês
baranda	verandah	varanda	padri	Catholic priest	padre
balti	Bucket	Balde	krush	cross	cruz
botam	button	Botão	peyara	guava	pera
saban	soap	sabão	mej	table	mesa
kedara	chair	cadeira	pau	sliced bread	pão
ata	custard apple	ata	sagu	sago	sagu



37

Corredor

35

Janela



Bengali Cuisine

- **The gastronomical legacy of the Portuguese with Bengali cuisines was widespread, profound, and enduring.**
- **The Portuguese brought several vegetables for the first time in India, which are now the inevitable components of Bengali cuisine.**
- **In Bengal, the Portuguese may have introduced the technique of curdling milk that became the basis of the famous Bengali sweet industry till now, especially the famous Rossogolla of West Bengal.**



Some Plants Introduced by the Portuguese in Bengal and their Use in Bengali Cuisine

English name	Bengali name	Comments	Use in Bengali cuisine
Peanut	China Badam	Introduced from America, perhaps via Africa.	Snacks
Cashew	Kaju	Kaju, hijli badam Native of Brazil, introduced on west coast of India to check erosion. Today India is the world leader in production.	Snacks, Dry friuts
Pineapple	Ananas	Introduced in Bengal in 1594 from Brazil.	Fruit, Chutney
Papaya	Pepe	Came to India via Philippines and Malaysia.	Vegetable and as fruit when ripe
Sweet Potato	Ranga Alu	Introduced from Africa or Brazil	As vegetable
Chili	Lanka	Origin in America, in all its forms spread rapidly in India as substitute for black pepper	Used as flavoring food
Lady's Finger	Vindi	Introduced from Africa	As vegetable



Portuguese influence

- Establishment of Confectionaries of Cakes and Pastries in Bengal.
- They introduced 'Ship Biscuits', Bandel Cheese—smoked and unsmoked, Plum puddings and Chocolates.
- One of their specialties was the preparation of sweetmeats from mangoes, oranges, lemons, ginger, and pickles.
- Portuguese bakers were also known for their breads, cakes, and other forms of pastries, filled and flavored for various occasions.
- M. X. D'GAMA in the name of Maxo in 1868, opened a Confectionary in Kolkata





Agriculture

Indo-Portuguese Museum, Kochi has a beautiful eighteenth century Portuguese text depicting Indian plants and their medicinal properties with recipes for curing various ailments. It was given the title *Hortus Malabaricus*, the true title is, 'Declaracao da aruores...Plantas' and the rest of the text will be translated from Portuguese to enable a better understanding of this intriguing manuscript.





Agriculture

Portuguese influence in Cultivation of Fruits and vegetables in Bengal like:

Fruits

- Pineapple
- Papaya
- Custard Apple
- Cashew nuts
- Pea nuts
- Guava
- Alfonso Mango

Vegetables

- CAULIFLOWER
- CABBAGE
- POTATO
- TOMATO
- OKRA
- CHILI
- RED POTATO

Plantation

- Tobacco
- Krishnakali Plant (*Mirabilis jalapa*)

Crops

- Maize



Trade and Commerce

From the account of an English politician Pollexfen in 1681 we came to know that.....

- During 17th century, at the time of fashion revolution in Europe the demand for Indian Silks and other Indian textiles was high.**
- Indian muslins and calicoes then became extremely popular all over Europe for both male and female dresses.**
- India was then the largest supplier of textiles and the important region was Bengal.**
- This hub then drew attention of the Dutch and English East India Companies into Bengal.**



Trade and Commerce

Though Bengal was the important area for sugar, saltpeter, indigo and cotton textiles, Portuguese mainly traded cotton textiles from Bengal



Marie Antoinette in her famous "muslin" portrait, 1783



Woman's muslin dress, Europe, c. 1855. Los Angeles County Museum of Art



Portuguese women in Indian Dresses





Architecture

- European impact was also felt on Hindu temple architecture.
- One of such examples is the Hangseshwari temple at Hooghly
- The architecture has clear European influence.





Art Works in Indian Museums

Black Mem in 18th Century

Gurusaday Museum, Kolkata

European Lady in the imagination of native artisan

European Lady enjoying music –18th Century





Art Works in Indian Museums



A 19th century rosewood Portuguese chair with Hindu and Christian motifs



Art Works in Indian Museums



Earliest form of Indo Portuguese furniture with Mughal and Portuguese influence, made of teak, ebony and rosewood and ivory-inlaid



Art Works in Indian Museums

18th century Indo-Portuguese crucifix

Collection of Indo Portuguese sculptures





Coin Collection in Indian Museum, Kolkata

- The Portuguese issued coins, including gold, after occupying Goa, India in 1510. The earliest gold coins, called Cruzadoor or Manoel (after King D. Manuel I of Portugal), were issued with the devices of a cross and sphere.



Obverse

- From AD 1549 Portuguese gold issues called Santhome (St. Thomas) had the representation of St Thomas (or from 1728, his cross) and the “crowned arms” of Portugal. To this class of specie belong the two Indian Museum pieces of AD 1785, minted during the reign of Donna Maria (1777-1799), the queen of Portugal (ccn.191). each of these weighs 4.8703 gms.



Reverse



Terracotta Plaques

18th Century Terracotta Plaque depicting European Soldiers. Source Gurusaday Museum, Kolkata

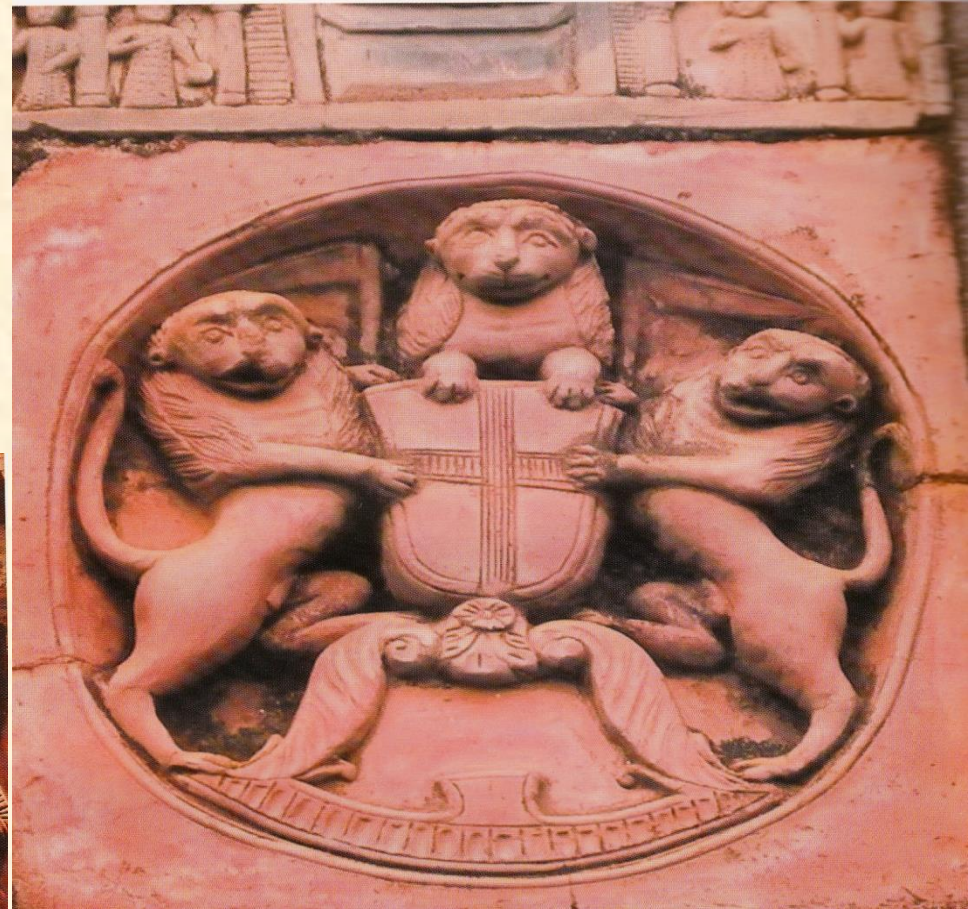


18th Century Terracotta Plaque, depicting European Soldiers. Source Radha-Govind Temple, Atpur, Hooghly



Terracotta Plaques

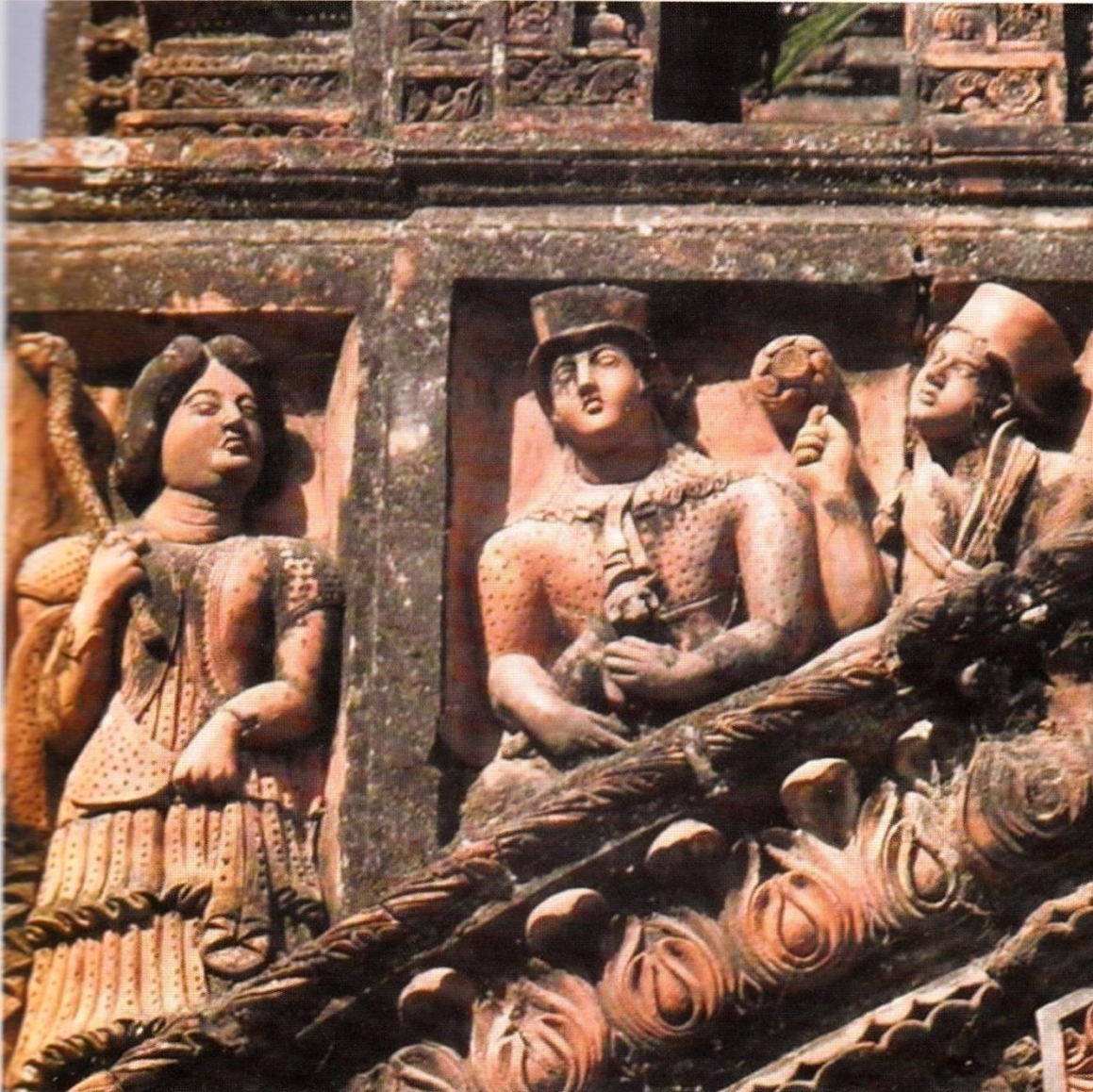
**19th Century Terracotta work of Court of Arms
in European Style found at Chandranath
Temple, Birbhum, West Bengal**



**18th Century terracotta works at Jorbangla
Temple, Itinda, West Bengal. Depicting
Christian Padres and Warriors**



Terracotta Plaques



**19th Century European People
at Bholanath Temple,
Bardhaman, West Bengal**



Paintings

Mughal Emperor Akbar (r. 1556-1605) holds a religious assembly in the *Ibadat Khana* (House of Worship) in Fatehpur Sikri; the two men dressed in black are the Jesuit missionaries Rodolfo Acquaviva and Francisco Henriques illustration to the *Akbarnama*, miniature painting by Nar Singh, ca. 1605





Paintings

Jahangir sited on a hourglass throne. Cupids write in it the wish of the king of living for 1000 years. The halo covers a mix between the sun and the moon, indicating that he is the centre of the universe.

There are 4 individuals at the left. Below we find Bichitr the painter himself, above him is the king James I of England. Over James I, there is a Turkish sultan and, above him, we find an old Sufi sheikh, a mystical saint. Jahangir is giving a book with an inscription to him. This is the famous painting of Bichitre painted in c. 1618, in this western influence is clearly visible.



Paintings

Painting of Manuel Maldonado, Royal Portuguese Army officer



Mouro da Guarda



Mouro, Criado de Pessoa grave



Dessay de Panem



Marinheiro de Goa



COLUANTE



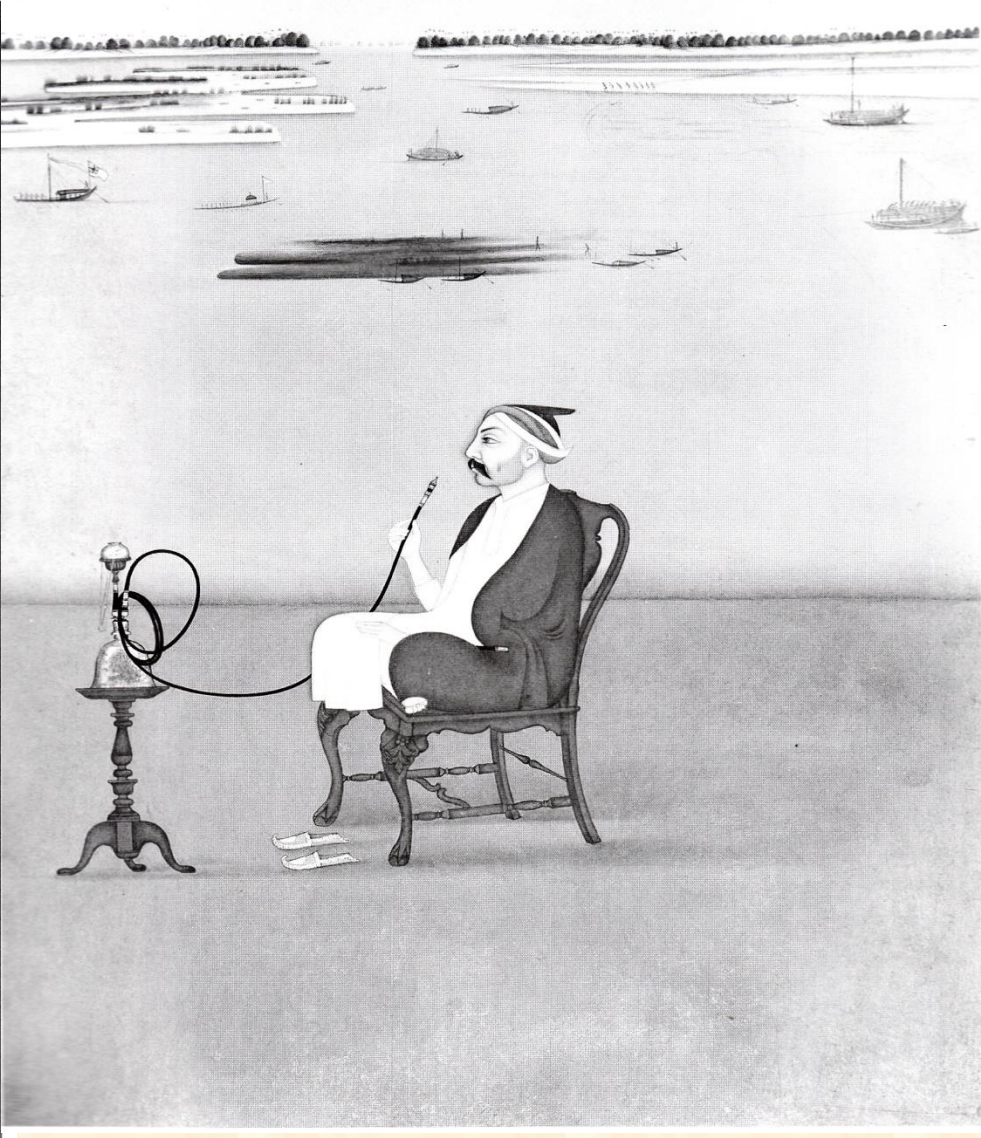
Influence on Paintings



Portraiture in Murshidabad, Bengal and Avadh by Dip Chand in 18th Century. Source 'After the Great Mughals' by Barbara Schmitz



Pahari Paintings of 18th Century



Portraiture in Murshidabad, Bengal and Avadh by Dip Chand in 18th Century. Source 'After the Great Mughals' by Barbara Schmitz

Paintings of Begum Samru in 18th Century



Portraiture
in
Murshidab
ad, Bengal
and Avadh
by Dip
Chand in
18th
Century.
Source
'After the
Great
Mughals'
by Barbara
Schmitz





Present-day cultural interactions

Alvarez in Bengali
feature film *Chander
Pahar*





Present-day cultural interactions

**Antony
Firingi in
Bengali film
*Jatiswar***





Traces of Bengal in Portugal—A Gap

- **Indian/Bengal objects in the museums of Portugal—its complete documentation**
- **Any traces of Bengal in the cultural history of Portugal**
- **Present day Cultural Interactions with Bengal**
- **Possibilities of cultural interactions with new generation art and culture**







Patas







University of Calcutta

- In pursuance of the Court of Directors of the East India Company to the Governor-General of India in Council, the University of Calcutta was founded on JANUARY 24, 1857.
- **Within India it is recognized as a "Five-Star University" and a "Centre with Potential for Excellence" by the University Grants Commission and the National Assessment and Accreditation Council.**
- The university has a total of 14 campuses spread over the city of Kolkata and its suburbs.
- **The university has sixty five departments organised into eight faculties: agriculture; arts; commerce; social welfare & business management; education, journalism and library science; engineering & technology; fine arts, music and home science; law and science.**
- The university has 18 research centers and 710 teachers
- **There are 17 Halls and Hostels under the University of Calcutta providing accommodation to about 2000 university students**



University of Calcutta



1. Rajabazar Campus 2. Alipore Campus

3. Ballygunge Campus 4. College Street Campus



University of Calcutta

- **At present 182 colleges are affiliated with the university.**
- **Annual Student Intake—Approx. 22000 at PG level, 600 at Ph.D. level, about 1,00,000 at UG level per annum**
- **103 regular courses are offered by the university at PG level**
- **The University is currently successfully implementing MOUs with 48 foreign universities in 22 countries, among them 10 in universities of USA and 8 in UK.**



University Museum—Asutosh Museum of Indian Art (1937)





Department of Museology

- **Founded in 1959**
- **Runs full time M.A.& M.Sc. Courses with internship programs.**
- **Offers researches at Doctoral and Post Doctoral levels.**
- **7 full time faculties (1 Professor, 3 Associate Professors and 3 Assistant Professors)**
- **Organize National and International Seminars, Conferences, Workshops at regular basis**
- **Presently 48 research scholars are pursuing their Doctoral research works with different fellowship programs**
- **Recently the Department has done student exchange program with Glasgow University.**
- **Visiting Faculty program for Professors and Professionals from India and abroad.**





Scope of Museological Research

- Conducts interdisciplinary researches based on heritage issues
- **Foster researches that rejuvenate past in present for future use**
- Many fellowship programs are in museum funded by University Grant Commission, University of Calcutta and some departments of Government of India.
- **Foreign researchers also completed their Doctoral research work from this department**
- Department is closely associated with the leading museums in Kolkata and India
- **Department publishes Annual Research Journals**
- Alumina are working in many prestigious museums and institutions in India and abroad



Way forward

The Department of Museology of the University of Calcutta has enough potential to establish a 'Centre for Portuguese Studies' in collaboration with similar departments in Portugal. Through this Centre, several activities could be undertaken:

- Offer certificate for small orientation programs and summer courses on Indo-Portugal relations and heritage issues;**
- Research documentation about Portuguese objects in museums of West Bengal and/or about objects from Bengal in Portuguese museums;**
- Management of databases on documented objects and publications for online use;**
- Undertake short-term/long-term projects on different issues of the Portuguese heritage in West Bengal;**



Contd....

- **Develop brochures, monographs, catalogues, books, and special issues of the Departmental Journal on local Portuguese heritage;**
- **Foster faculty, students and visitors exchange programs in order to explore cross-cultural heritage and exchange knowledge that may bring people together;**
- **Curate exhibitions in collaboration**
- **Arrange orientation programs on the Portuguese influence in Bengal through workshops, symposium or seminars;**
- **Explore the possibility of fellowship programs for PhDs and other research work.**



Thank you!