

PORTofCALL

African-European-Asian
Encounters: Cultural
Heritage and the Early
Modern Indian Ocean

Jaffna



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PORTofCALL. African-European-Asian Encounters: Cultural Heritage and the Early Modern Indian Ocean

JAFFNA

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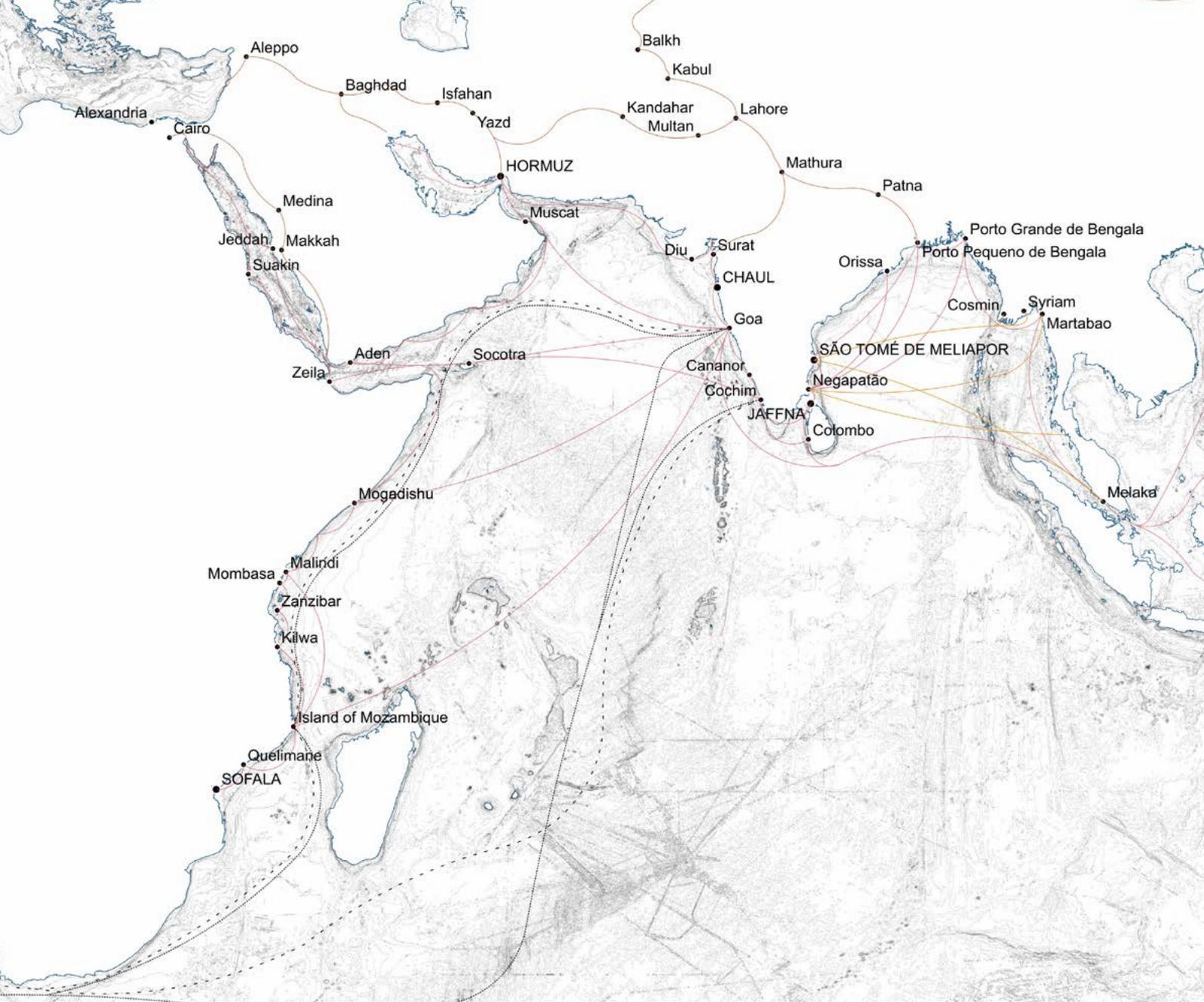
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Routes.

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- Supplementary concessions in the seventeenth century
- Carreira da Índia (1589-1622): outward voyage
- Carreira da Índia (1589-1622): return voyage
- Main land routes

Sources.

Trading routes in the XVI century (Livia P. 2017, Fage J.D. 1978, Prakash O. 1998, Thomaz L.F. 2018)

Trading routes in the XVII century (Subrahmanyam S. 2012)

Carreira da Índia (1589-1622): outward voyage (Boxer C.R. 1959, Casale G. 2010, Subrahmanyam S. 2012)

Carreira da Índia (1589-1622): return voyage (Boxer C.R. 1959, Casale G. 2010, Subrahmanyam S. 2012)

Land routes (Das Gupta A. 2001, Neelis J. 2011)

Jaffna (Sri Lanka)

Port settlements in the Indian Ocean formed the nodes of ancient maritime trade routes, often becoming landscapes of cultural encounters where mercantile societies thrived on the circulation of people, commodities and ideas, linking societies and cultures dispersed throughout Asia, the east coast of Africa and the Mediterranean. During the early modern period, European nations and trading companies overran the ocean's trade routes, monopolizing them, and imposed imperial and colonial projects that had a deep impact on the region's economies and societies. However, when the Portuguese first attempted to control the Indian Ocean's major maritime trade routes and ports, negotiation was as vital as naval power. The impact of these early modern African-Asian-European encounters and negotiations on the landscapes and habitats of the Indian Ocean's littoral regions were often as strong on the hinterlands and suburban areas of the port cities controlled and/or developed by European colonial agency as on the cityscapes themselves.

In this context, the port of Jaffna, possibly dating to the first millennium AD, had a brief and violent period of Portuguese occupation, from 1619 to 1658. During that period, the Portuguese built several defensive structures as well as a significant number of churches and chapels in the villages in Jaffna's hinterland, controlling a fertile territory served by maritime networks that linked northern Sri Lanka to southern India, two regions united by the Hindu religion and the Tamil language. The export of elephants captured in the interior of the island was an important part of this trade.

chronology

1258. The Kingdom of Jaffna becomes tributary to the Pandyan Empire of South India.

1505. Arrival of the first Portuguese in Sri Lanka.

1590. Development of Christian missionary activity in the region of Jaffna.

1619. Conquest of the Kingdom of Jaffna by the captain Filipe de Oliveira.

1619-21. The Portuguese shift the political center of the Kingdom from Nallur to Jaffna.

1645. Survey of Jaffna's revenue villages.

1658. Conquest of Jaffna by the Dutch.

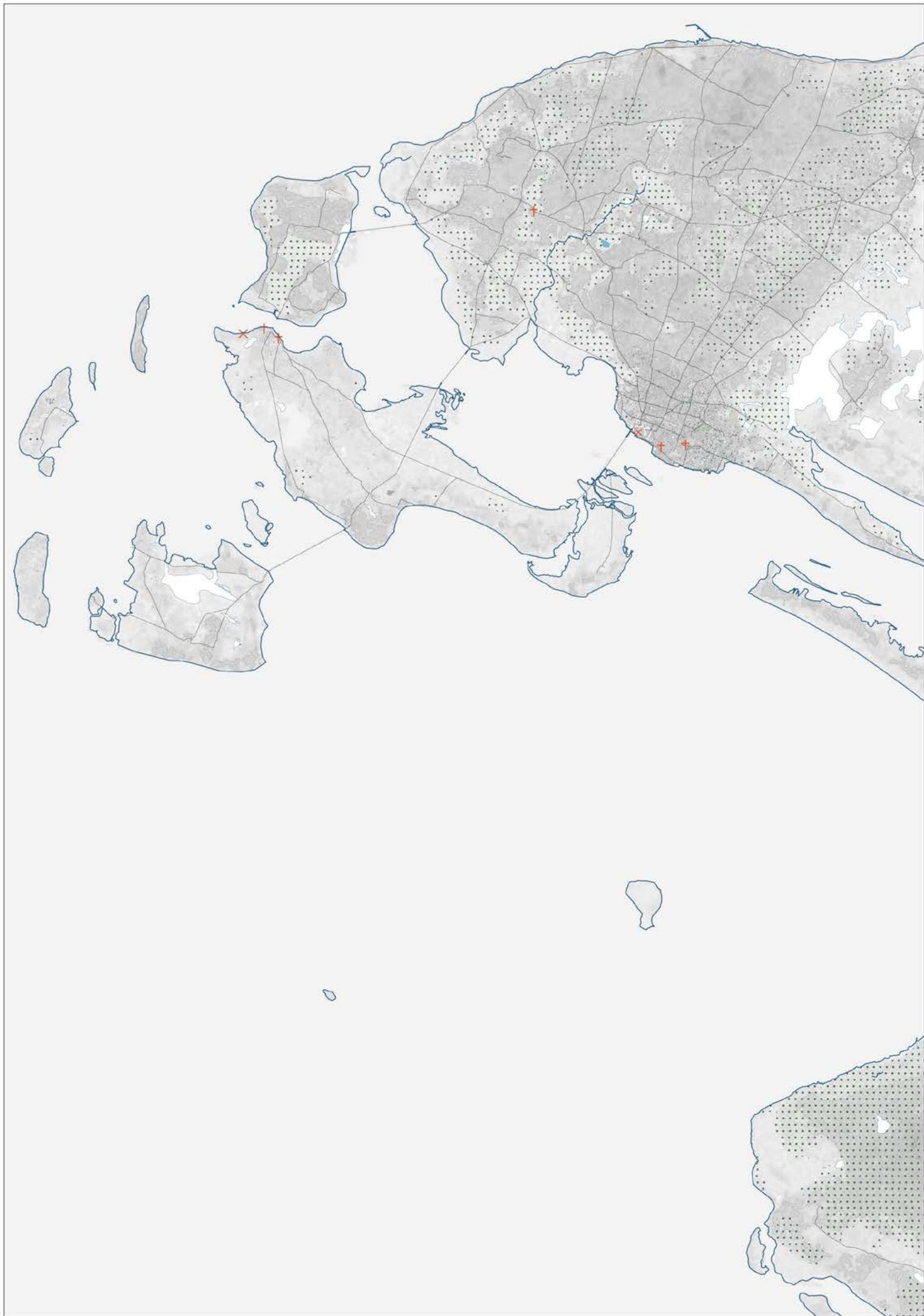
1687. The Goan priest Joseph Vaz arrives in Jaffna.

1795. The British occupy Jaffna.

1886. Creation of the Catholic Diocese of Jaffna.

05

1619
CONQUEST OF JAFFNA
BY THE PORTUGUESE
1658
JAFFNA CONQUERED BY THE
DUTCH EAST INDIAN COMPANY



Situated in the northeastern coast of Sri Lanka along the shallow waters of the Palk Bay, the port settlement of Jaffna, or *Yāpanaya* in romanised Tamil, was the major maritime outlet of the medieval Kingdom of Aryacakravarti, later known as the Kingdom of Jaffna. Recent archaeological finds from Jaffna's main fortification suggest the existence of a port of call probably dating back to the ancient period, with Islamic and Chinese ceramics attesting to its flourishing activity during the medieval period.¹ The Kingdom's capital of Nallur was located about 3 kilometres inland. Together with the Buddhist kingdoms of Kandy and Kotte, Jaffna was one of the three powers in Sri Lanka when the first Portuguese arrived in the Island in the early sixteenth century. The inhabitants of the Jaffna Peninsula were mostly ethnic Tamil, spoke Tamil and professed Hinduism. To the south of the Peninsula, the center-north arid territories were split among Vanni chiefdoms. Both culturally and economically, Jaffna was closer to the southeastern coastlands of India across the Palk Bay than to the regions of Kotte or Kandy.

Attracted by the trade in spices and gemstones, the Portuguese first established trading outposts and fortifications in the south-western coast of Sri Lanka in 1505.² From the 1540s onwards, several attempts were made to bring the Kingdom of Jaffna under the influence of the *Estado da Índia*, as the Portuguese sought to dominate the coastlands of the Palk Bay and the Gulf of Mannar with their lucrative pearl fishing activities (Fig. 1).³ The successful conversion of the Parava communities on the Indian side of the Gulf of Mannar during the 1540s also motivated the Portuguese to attempt similar ventures among Jaffna's Hindu population.⁴ One of the first military interventions in the region occurred in 1560 when the vice-roy Constantino de Bragança captured the Island of Mannar and sacked Nallur, forcing the king Cankili I (r. 1519-1565) to withdraw. For the next three decades, Jaffna maintained nominal independence while paying tribute to

1. Christopher Davis et al, "The antiquity of Jaffna Fort: new evidence from post-disaster archaeological investigations in northern Sri Lanka," *Antiquity* 93(368) (2019). doi:10.15184/aqy.2019.30

2. C. R. de Silva, "The Portuguese East India Company 1628-1633," *Luso-Brazilian Review*, 11(2) (1974), 152-205; M. N. Pearson, *The Portuguese in India* (Cambridge University Press, 1987).

3. J. M. Flores, *Os Portugueses e o Mar de Ceilão: Trato, diplomacia e guerra (1498-1543)* (Edições Cosmos, 1998), 86-89, 179, 213.

4. K. Staněk, "A tentativa portuguesa de colonizar Sri Lanka (1580-1630)," *Povos e Culturas*, 20, 2017, pp. 215-283; J. M. Flores, "Um Homem que tem muito credits naquelas Partes': Miguel Ferreira, os 'Alevantados' do Coromandel e o Estado da Índia," *Mare Liberum*, 5, 1993, pp. 21-38.



figure 1

5. Jorge Manuel Flores, *Hum curto historia de Ceylan = A short history of Ceylon: five hundred years of relations between Portugal and Sri Lanka*, ed. Richard Trewhinnard (Lisboa: Fundação Oriente, 2000).

6. Flores 1998, 86-89, 179

7. Abeyasinghe, Tikiri. *Portuguese Rule in Ceylon 1594-1612* (Colombo: Lake House, 1966); Abeyasinghe, Tikiri. *Jaffna under the Portuguese* (Pannipitiya: Stamford Lake, 2005); Gnana Pragasar, Swami. "The Church of the Palavesis," *The Ceylon Antiquary and Literary Register IX* (1923): 115-16.

8. Schmidt, Armin, Prishanta Gunawardhana, Christopher Davis, Duncan Hale, Robin Coningham, P. Pushparatnam, Richie Villis, Mark Woolston-Houshold, and Mark Manuel. "Interpreting GPR Data from Jaffna Fort, Northern Sri Lanka, Using Historic Maps and New Excavations." In *New Global Perspectives on Archaeological Prospection: 13th International Conference on Archaeological Prospection, 28 August - 1 September 2019, Sligo - Ireland*, edited by James Bonsall, 224-27. Archaeopress, 2019. <https://doi.org/10.2307/jj.15135979.62>.

the Portuguese captain-general of Mannar.⁵ Another major military incursion took place in 1591, when the Portuguese deposed King Puviraja Pandaram (r. 1561-65, 1582-91) and installed his son, Ethirmanna Cinkam (r. 1591-1617), as a client ruler.⁶ These incursions crippled the Kingdom's military might and paved the way for the 1619 invasion that led to its annexation by the Portuguese lasting three decades - despite several revolts to regain independence.

The Dutch conquered Jaffna in 1658 after a three-month siege, the last Portuguese fortification in Sri Lanka to surrender. Dutch rule brought a new period of prosperity for the city and its region, but the presence of Catholic Tamil and Portuguese Burgher communities remained a legacy of the Portuguese historical layer. Goan missionaries of the Congregation of the Oratory of St Philip Neri worked in the Jaffna hinterland, sometimes clandestinely, rebuilding the old Portuguese churches. In September 1795, the Dutch garrison in Jaffna surrendered to the British without a fight. During the British period, the city grew and the Catholic community flourished, leading to the creation of the Diocese of Jaffna in 1886.

During the early twentieth century, scholarly interest in the Portuguese historical layer of Sri Lanka led to the publications of sources and articles, including the first studies on the churches founded by the Portuguese missionaries.⁷ Recent archaeological excavations within the precinct of the Dutch fort in Jaffna have led to significant findings (Fig. 2), including what appears to be some of the foundation walls of the church of Our Lady of Miracles.⁸



figure 2

The city of Jaffna

The Islands in the Palk Bay to the west of Jaffna were among the first areas to be occupied by the Portuguese. From the 1590s onward, Franciscan missionaries built churches near Jaffna, including four churches in Kayts Island, known to the Portuguese as 'Ilha do Cais dos Elefantes' or 'Tanadiva'.⁹ A small fortification was built in the 1620s near the Franciscan church and residency of St. John the Baptist, in the Island's northern tip. In Karaitivu Island ('Ilha de Cardiva'), house of the Portuguese leaseholder was fortified around the same time. In a small islet located between Kayts and Karaitivu, the Portuguese built the fort of St. George, probably in the early 1650s.¹⁰ This fortification was rebuilt by the Dutch after 1658 and renamed Hammenhiel. Further to the west, in the Island of Delft ('Ilha das Vacas'), the Portuguese leaseholder's house was also fortified.¹¹ There might have been other small tower-houses in Analaitivu ('Ilha de D. Clara') and other smaller Islands and coastal locations (Fig. 3).

9. According to Fr. Paulo da Trindade, the revenue of the whole Island of Kayts was given to the Franciscans by the king Ethirimana Cinkam. The four churches were: St John the Baptist (*São João Batista*) in the Elephants Quay (*Cais dos Elefantes*); St Thomas (*São Tomé*) in Allaipiddy and Mandaitivu; Our Lady of Health (*Nossa Senhora da Saúde*) in Velanai; and Our Lady in Saravanai. P. da Trindade, *Conquista Espiritual do Oriente*, Vol. III, Centro de Estudos Históricos Ultramarinos, 1967, pp. 190-193.

10. Council of State of the Estado da Índia dated April 1649, *Assentos do Conselho do Estado da Índia*, vol. III (Bastorá: Tipografia Rangel, 1955), pp. 125-126.

11. Letter by King John IV dated 18 February 1649, *Livro 60*, fl. 93, DRILM, PT/TT/GEI/001/0060, IAN/TT.

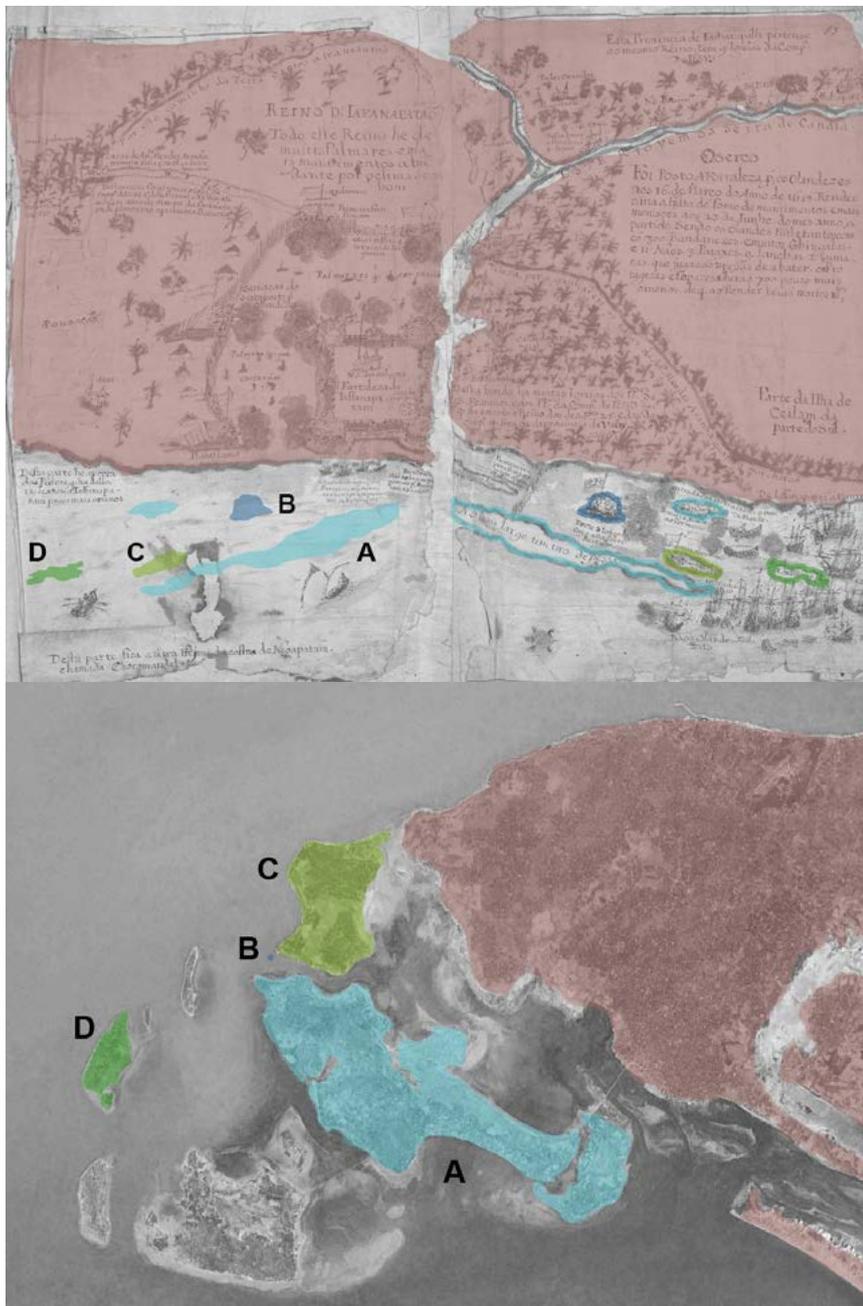


figure 3

12. P. da Trindade, op.cit., pp. 188-191.

13. P. da Trindade, op.cit., pp. 214, 215; F. de Queyroz, *Conquista Temporal e Espiritual de Ceilão* (H. C. Cottle, Government Printer), 1916, p. 515.

14. P. da Trindade, op.cit., p. 220.

15. F. de Queyroz, op.cit., p. 528

16. A. Bocarro, op.cit., p. 139v.

17. P. da Trindade, op.cit., pp. 184-200, 219-220.

18. P. da Trindade, op.cit., pp.184-200, 219-220. F. de Queyroz, op.cit., pp. 515, 558, 566.

19. T. Abeyasinghe, *Jaffna under the Portuguese*, Stamford Lake, 2005. Rv. S. Gnana Prakasa, "The Church of the Palavesis," *The Ceylon Antiquary and Literary Register*, IX, 1923, pp.115-116. V. Perniola, *The Catholic Church in Sri Lanka. The Portuguese Period, Volume III (1620-1658)*. Tisara Prakasakayo Ltd., 1991, p. 90.

20. P. da Trindade, op.cit., p. 244; A. Bocarro, op.cit., p. 139v.

In 1602, the Franciscans founded the church of Our Lady of Victory on the mainland near Jaffna's central settlement. This church was later pulled down and in 1621, the missionaries began the construction of the new church and convent of Our Lady or Miracles on the site of Jaffna's main mosque.¹² This church became the epicentre of Portuguese influence in the city and its hinterland (Fig. 4). When the first challenges to their authority broke out in 1620, the captain Filipe de Oliveira divided his soldiers between the church of Our Lady of Miracles, the main Hindu temple in Jaffna ('Presidio do Pagode'), and the church of St John the Baptist in Kayts.¹³ During this uprising, the church of Our Lady of Miracles was fortified with two bulwarks mounting artillery "with the church placed in the middle" surrounded by "strong walls with their arrow slits and parapets".¹⁴ The larger fort of Our Lady of the Miracles was begun in 1625 surrounding the older fortified convent. Within the fort's precinct were the hospital, the prison ('tronco'), the rice granary, and the captain's house.¹⁵ Outside the fort's walls were the factory and the customs house.¹⁶

With the stabilization of Portuguese rule in the 1620s, the town outside the fort grew "large and extended" with "big gardens where each one took the land as he pleased".¹⁷ Several other religious buildings were built in Jaffna, including the main secular church usually referred to as the 'Matriz' or 'Sé' (1622 or 1623) the church of the 'Misericórdia' (ca. 1622) the Jesuit church and college (1623), and the Dominican church and convent of Our Lady of the Rosary (1623).¹⁸ The Dominicans had one Parish church besides their convent, known as the church of the 'Palavelins', in an unidentified location close to the city of Jaffna.¹⁹ To the northeast of the fort was the house of the field captain António Mendes Aranha, to the east was the main Hindu Temple adapted as an outwork defending the fort, and to the southeast was the parish church of St. John the Baptist under the care of the Franciscans. By the mid-1630s, there were 817 Portuguese, or Portuguese-descended, Christians living in Jaffna, a number that excluded infant babies.²⁰

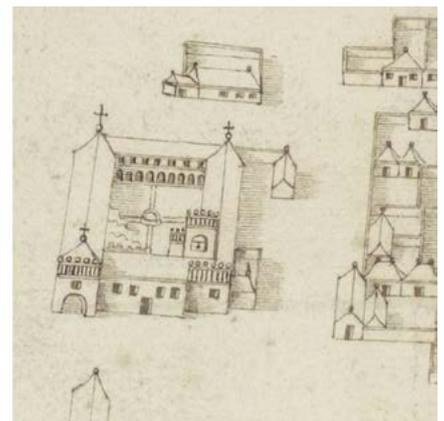
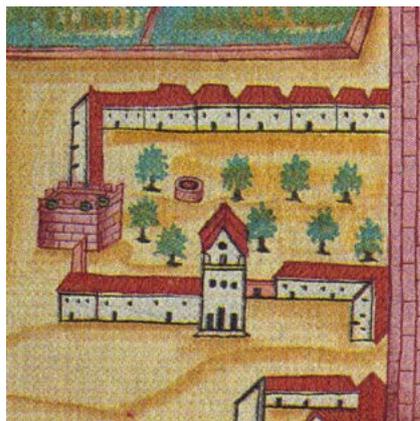


figure 4

The hinterland of Jaffna

11

During the 1620s, Franciscan and Jesuit missionaries began the mass conversions of the population in the hinterland of Jaffna. The Franciscans built churches in Nallur, Chavakachcheri, Kachchai, Kopai, Manipay, Uruiur, Point Pedro, Puttur, Cateveli, Chundikkuli, Urupeti, Varani, Eluthumadduval, Navatkuli, Kayts, Velanai, Alaipiddi, Island of Marticota, Analaitivu, Nayinativu, Neduntivu, Pooneryn, Elaur, and the so-called 'Church of the Mudaliyars'. Jesuits missionaries founded churches in Kottandarkulam, Pallai, Tampakamam, Mugamalai, Achchuvveli, Maylidd, Tellippalai, Mallakam, Pandattarippu, Chankanai, Vaddukodai, and Karativu (Fig. 5).²¹

In the wake of the missionaries' conversion activity, the Portuguese in Jaffna began collecting revenue from the villages, as they imposed the 'prazo' practice over the territory, based on the legal framework of the emphyteusis system. From that time onward, the survey, or 'Tombo', of the villages became a recurrent concern for the Portuguese metropole. The 'Tombos' served as a meticulous record compiling the survey of all villages and individual plots of land, along with information about their owners, legal titles, agricultural practices, taxes, and various other details. The Jaffna 'Tombo' was only completed in the 1640s, long after Jaffna's villages had been leased. The official Amaro Roiz, 'vedor da fazenda' in Sri Lanka, was the main compiler of the Jaffna 'Tombo'. In 1639, he informed the metropole of the difficulties he faced during this task, particularly from the Portuguese captains who were responsible for the biggest losses of revenue.²² As a consequence of this report, the metropole instructed the vice-

21. See S. G. Perera, *The Jesuits in Ceylon (In the XVI and XVII Centuries)*, Madura, De Nobili Press, 1941, pp. 104, 110; P. da Trindade, op.cit., pp. 242 note, 243-247; F. de Queyroz, op.cit., pp. 292-320, 586.

22. Letter from Amaro Roiz dated 24 November 1639, *Livro das Monções* nº 21-A, Ms. 27, fl. 323, Historical Archive of Goa.



figure 5

23. Letter from the regent Princess Margarida dated 14 March 1640, *Livro das Monções* n° 21-B, Ms. 28, fl. 639, Historical Archive of Goa.

24. For a complete overview of the 'tombos' see Paranavitana, "The Portuguese Tombos as a source of sixteenth and seventeenth-century Sri Lankan history,"; Abeyasinghe, *Jaffna under the Portuguese*, 40-50.

25. Abeyasinghe, *Jaffna under the Portuguese*, pp. 24-27.

roy João Telo de Meneses not to lease more villages before the completion of the 'Tombo' and to assign the revenue of the most stable and profitable villages towards paying the soldiers and officers stationed in Jaffna.²³

Most of the villages were leased to Portuguese veterans and their Sri Lankan allies, with some being assigned to the Franciscans or the Jesuits.²⁴ However, Portuguese settlers and their descendants preferred to live in the city of Jaffna or in the Island's southwestern coastal settlements, and the leased villages never formed a structured network of settlements of *casados*, as was the case in the Northern Province in the northwestern coast of India (Fig. 6). Towards the end of the Portuguese rule, the territory of Jaffna began losing population because its inhabitants couldn't bear the taxes imposed on their activities and moved to the province of Vanni and other parts of south India.²⁵



figure 6

The siege of 1658

13

Built between 1625 and ca. 1635, the fort of Our Lady of Miracles was one of the last fortifications constructed by the Portuguese in the Indian Ocean region outside of the Indian Subcontinent. According to António Bocarro writing around 1634, the fort was a "perfect square" of sides measuring about 220 meters, with "octagonal bastions" at the angles.²⁶ The walls were about 8 meters high and 3,3 meters wide, built of stone and lime. There were four octagonal bulwarks in each corner, measuring about 17,5 meters in diameter. Inside the fort lived about 250 men capable of bearing arms, including about 90 'casados' both of Portuguese and Asian descent.²⁷

Following their conquest of Colombo in 1656, the Dutch captured Mannar Island in February 1658 and from there they sent an expeditionary army overland towards Jaffna.²⁸ Following brief skirmishes in the town beyond the fort, the Dutch captured the landed house of Captain António Mendes de Aranha (Fig. 7) and the Jesuit College in early March 1658, from where they excavated a trench extending to the "Old Houses that served as a stockade" or outwork of the fort, in the site of the city's old Hindu Temple.²⁹ In this location, the attackers constructed their primary assault battery and established their headquarters.³⁰ According to one source, there were about 700 "Portuguese and Topasses" defending the fort.³¹

26. E. Reimers, *Constantine de Sa's Maps and Plans of Ceylon (1624-1628)*, A. C. Richards Government Printer, 1929, p. 56; A. Bocarro, *Livro das plantas de todas as fortalezas, cidades e povoações do Estado da Índia Oriental [1635]*, Biblioteca Pública de Évora, bpe-cod-cxv-2-1, 139v.

27. A. Bocarro, "O Livro das plantas de todas as fortalezas, cidades e povoações do Estado da Índia Oriental" *António Bocarro. 1635* (ed. 1992), p. 239-242

28. João Ribeiro, *Fatalidade Histórica da Ilha do Ceilão* (Lisboa: Publicações Alfa, 1989), 112.

29. Queyroz, *Conquista Temporal e Espiritual de Ceilão*, 823.

30. Johann Jacob Saar, *Reise Nach Java, Banda, Ceylon und Persien 1644-1660* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1930), 162.



figure 7

31. See F. de Queyroz, *op.cit.* pp. 819, 821, 823.

32. J. Saar, *op.cit.* p. 162; F. de Queyroz, *op.cit.*, p. 823.

33. Philippus Baldaeus, *A true and exact description of the most celebrated [...]* (London: A. and J. Churchill, 1703), 797-98.

34. Letter by the Conselho o Governo da Índia dated 13 May 1658, *Livro das Monções* nº 26-A, Ms. 35, fl. 50-51v, Historical Archive of Goa.



figure 8

Meanwhile, the Dutch fleet approached the Islands of Kayts and Cardiva, located to the west of Jaffna, and blockaded the sea fort of St. George ('São Jorge', later renamed Hammenhiel), situated between the two islands. The Dutch captured St George on April 28. During the siege of the main fort, the Dutch employed four siege mortars that fired the fragments of crushed tombstones from the churches.³² The Portuguese in the fort surrendered on June 23, after three and a half months of bombardment, made worse by hunger and disease.³³ Throughout the siege, Goa was under threat by the armies of the Sultanate of Bijapur, and the Dutch had supremacy over the seas, making it difficult and risky for the Estado da Índia to assist Jaffna with soldiers and supplies (Fig. 8-9).³⁴



figure 9

Figure 1 Boats that ferry pilgrims across from the mainland 10 miles away, 1960 (Department of National Archives in Colombo, Times of Ceylon collection, Photo 326-IM-0979-0040).

Figure 2 Traces of the Portuguese wall identified during the last archaeological campaign (photo by Giuseppe Resta, 2024).

Figure 3 Islands represented in the British Library map. A: Kayts (Ilha do Cais); B: Hammenhiel (Forte Sao Jorge); C: Karaitivu (Cardiva); D: Analaitivu (Ilha de D. Clara).

Figure 4 Detail of the Franciscan convent. On the left, detail from Bocarro, A. (1635) *Livro das plantas de todas as fortalezas, cidades e povoaçoens do Estado da India Oriental*. Biblioteca Pública de Évora, bpe-cod-cxv-2-1, 139v.; On the right, detail from the map NAJ1 item number NL-HaNA_4.VELH_619.61. Credits: Creative Commons Public Domain.

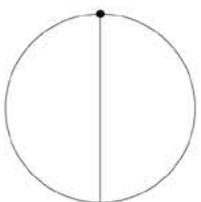
Figure 5 Church of the Holy Trinity in Chankanai (photo by Giuseppe Resta, 2024).

Figure 6 Map of the Kingdom of Jaffna, rotated 180° from the original to align the north to the top (pub. in Philip Baldaeus, *A true and exact description of the most celebrated East-India coasts of Malabar and Coromandel* (London: Printed for A. and J. Churchill, 1703), 797).

Figure 7 Houses of A. Mendes Aranha. On the left, detail of the map of the siege of Jaffna from the Filippe Neri Xavier Collection at the British Library. Item number IOR/X/14643/13 (Credits: British Library).

Figure 8 Detail of the map of the siege of Jaffna from the Filippe Neri Xavier Collection at the British Library. Item number IOR/X/14643/13 (Credits: British Library).

Figure 9 Detail of the map of the siege of Jaffna from the Filippe Neri Xavier Collection at the British Library. Item number IOR/X/14643/13 (Credits: British Library).

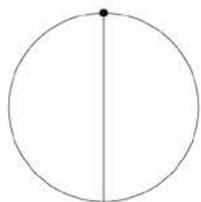


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1. Jesuit College
2. Franciscan church and convent of Our Lady of Miracles
3. Church of Misericórdia
4. Dominican Convent and church of Our Lady of the Rosary
5. Unfinished church
6. Pre-Portuguese urban nucleus
7. Hindu temple ("Presidio do Pagode")
8. Moat
9. House of the captain
10. House of the general
11. Church of St. John the Baptist

-  sea water
-  marshy area
-  water tanks
-  woods
-  urban and suburban areas
-  Christian place of worship
-  Muslim place of worship
-  Hindu place of worship



0 250 500m





descriptions of Jaffna.

– various authors

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The fort of the Elephants' Quay [Kayts] is 9 degrees and two thirds above the equator, located on an Island near the entrance to the Jaffna roadstead, and is two leagues [ca. 13,2 kilometres] long, and one fourth of a league [ca. 1,6 kilometres] wide, all home to local Christians, people who are not useful for bearing arms. The fort is of the size of the one in Manar, but better shaped, it has two bulwarks looking towards the Island, and one 'couraça' towards the sea, and [the fort] is nineteen 'braças' [ca. 41,8 meters] long and three 'braças' [ca. 6,6 meters] wide; it is not filled up but [its parapets are] raised in stilts [...] and has above twelve embrasures, and from them to the ground are two and a half 'braças' [ca. 5,5 meters] in height [...] The precinct within the fort has 66 'braças' [ca. 145,2 meters] in circuit, and a well of insalubrious water. The artillery available in this fort are eight cannons of iron, three of eight pounds each, three of six [pounds], and two of five [pounds], and all [firing] iron shot, and two falcons of bronze [...] and it is garrisoned by forty soldiers and one captain [...] This Island of the Elephants' Quay has four churches that are parishes of the Christians that live there [...].

Jaffna ['Jafanapatão'] is a Kingdom in the Island of Ceylon [...] and [the port city] became settled with Portuguese and the fortress of Our Lady of Miracles that today is completed is placed on the waterline in shape a perfect square with each side wall [measuring] 100 'braças' [ca. 220 meters] long and four ['braças'] [ca. 8,8 meters] high including the parapets, and fifteen palms [ca. 3,3 meters] wide, of stone and lime. The four octagonal bulwarks in the four corners are higher than the [side] walls one 'braça' [ca. 2,2 meters], and are filled up and [the bulwarks have a] span of eight 'braças' [ca. 17,6 meters]. Inside the fortress live twenty [Portuguese-descended] married men ['cazados'], with large houses of stone and lime, that are also part of the garrison, besides the soldiers that are stationed there, which are three companies, and together with the others ['cazados'], total 250 soldiers, including 70 local married men ['cazados da terra']; and all in all the Portuguese and their sons are 120, and the black Christians ['pretos Christãos'] are seventy, all men

António
Bocarro



of arms [...] There are five churches [in Jaffna], the Franciscan church with three friars, the Dominican church with one [friar], the Company's [Jesuit] church with three [friars], the Sé [main secular church] and the 'Misericórdia' church [...] This fortress of Jaffna has a customs house ['alfandiga'] [...] and the in the land there are no other goods besides coconuts, jaggery, coconut fibre, sesame oil, 'amargoza' and some elephants [...] The revenue from the customs house is applied to the hospital where the sick are cured and is run by the Priests from the Company [Jesuits] [...].

"O Livro das plantas de todas as fortalezas, cidades e povoações do Estado da Índia Oriental" António Bocarro. 1635 (ed. 1992) [p. 239-242]

Johann
Saar

On the 13th of March [1658] our fleet [...] went close to land [in the Island of Manar] and put themselves in half a moon [...] Early on the 14 of March [...] we set off in small boats with good courage. Once we had land [...] there were many deaths, many wounded, and they [the Portuguese] had to retreat back to their fort [...] On the 15th [of March] we went to the suburb, made a good breastwork, and fortified two monasteries to defend them against the attack, and let our shells play on them, throwing in stones underneath, which ricocheted powerfully [...] On the fourth day they [Portuguese in the fort of Manar] began to ask for peace [...]

On the 18th of May, we went for the castle [Jaffna], and as we were still a quarter of an hour away, close to the suburb, when they [Portuguese] attacked us with eleven hundred [men]. But we soon drove them in [to the city] again, and [captured] seventy, who had to give more recent news of the situation. They reported, however, that there were about four thousand souls, small and great, in it [Jaffna fort], that is, citizens with their wives and children, and slaves [...] We sat down in the suburbs [of Jaffna], in four churches that were only a musket-shot from the walls [...] But we had to make do with water from the land; the seventy prisoners we forced to drink water from the wells [...] for there were many dead frogs in them, and it [the water] was completely blue at the top, as if a covered with skin. So that no more harm would come to anyone, all the wells were filled with earth and sand [...]

Reise Nach Java, Banda, Ceylon Und Persien 1644-1660, Johann Jacob Saar, The Hague, Martinus Nijhoff, 1930. [p 155-163]

Muitos palmares

Por este caminho da Terra dentro a trauesarao

REINO D: IAFANAPATAO

Todo este Reino he de muitos Palmares. e mais mantimentos a bu ante por o clima ser bom.

Cazas de An. Mendes Aranha primeiro sitio q os Olandezes tomarao

Destas cazas forao tomar o Coll. da comp. das 17. e delle fizerao esta foz ate a chegar a tiro de Mosque da Fortaleza onde plantarao a primeira Batavia.

Coll. da Comp. de 17.

Cazas d'armas

Primeira frotella ficacam.

Cazas velhas q. seruiam de traqueira.

Palmares q. cortarao

Situacao do sercoposto p. os Olandezes.

Pouoacao

Palmares q. cortaram

N. S. dos Milagres Fortaleza de Iaffanapatao.

Asce.

Plataforma

Esta parte he aponta das Pedras q. ha dellos 12 legoas a Iaffanapatao pouco mais o menos

Forvelleda. Não os bracos p. que nos p. N. S. dos Milagres. mas os de logo depois.

Esta parte fica a terra Hym. a costa de Negapatam. chamada Choromandel.

Esta Prouincia de Iacharapally pertense
ao mesmo Reino. Tem 9. Igrejas da Comp.
De IESU.



ESTE RIO VEM DA SERRA DE CANDIA.
O serco

Foi Posto a Fortaleza p. os Olandezes
aos 16. de Marco do Anno de 1658. Render
rãna a falta de fome de mantimentos. e mais
monisoes aos 23. de Junho. do mes anno, a
partido. Sendo os Olandes nãe tantos com
cõ 300. Bandanezes. emuitos Chingalas.
e 11. Naos. 3. Pataxos. 9. Lanchas. 2. suma-
cas. que jugauão o pesas de abater, os Pro-
tugezes et apazes. herão 700. pouco mais
o menos. de q. ao render herão mortos 11,

Desta banda ha muitas Igrejas dos PP. de
S. Francisco. e dos PP. da Comp. de IESU das
q. ha em todo o Reino. dos des. P. 25. e dos da
Comp. 16. fora as da prouincia de Vauy

Parte da Ilha de
Ceilam da
parte do Sul.

Manqueira para fuzos
de um oficio
de abridura
No mais largo tem tiro de pesa
De Iacharapally a Manar ha
12. legoas
Entrada das embraças q. vem
de Manar.
Bateria Olandeza
ao forte
Barria Olandeza
sumaco
Almeida
capitão
Entrada do Rio
Naos Olandezas

The port of Jaffna had a brief and violent period of Portuguese occupation, from 1619 to 1658. During that period, the Portuguese built several defensive structures as well as a significant number of churches and chapels in the villages in Jaffna's hinterland, controlling a fertile territory served by maritime networks that linked northern Sri Lanka to southern India, two regions united by the Hindu religion and the Tamil language.

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